

### **Overview of Role**

Costume designers are responsible for the design and creation of the costume requirements for the production. They visually interpret the scripts and work alongside directors, producers, writers, the production designer and hair and make-up designers to contribute to the look and storytelling of the production. Costume designers will initially break down the script – researching, sketching and developing mood boards of characters and clothes to communicate their styles, working out what they need to create, purchase or hire. Working within budget constraints and deadlines they recruit a team, organise a schedule of purchases and hires, and ensure the costumes are created on time for fittings. With the help of the team, they schedule fittings and take photographs. These are then discussed with the producer and director and approved for filming. Lastly, the designer establishes the costumes on set.

### **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. Pre-production**

- Interpret the script and assess the scale and type of production and its overall visual style
- Create a costume breakdown that confirms the number of costumes required for the characters in the production, the date and time required, and the budget
- Carry out costume research according to the brief and production requirements
- Collect and collate information about the period or genre of the production for communication to the department and other creative heads of department (HOD's)
- Identify key garment construction techniques and the appropriate materials in relation to the genre or historical period of the production
- Ensure the costume design concept conserves the function, style and purpose of the costume
- Identify the creative preferences of the director and performers
- Identify action points in the storyline that call for special costume provision
- Identify any special effects or stunts where required, communicate with the appropriate persons and assess the affect they may have upon the costumes
- Determine how the story and timeline will affect the look of each character
- Assess the creative and technical requirements needed to produce the costume designs
- Plan the costume design making process with the costume supervisor and assistant costume designer (ACD)
- Estimate the cost and time scale of the costume manufacture with the costume supervisor and production
- Communicate the information collected and the design concept to the production team, other departments or individuals
- Negotiate and agree changes required to the design concept
- Negotiate, agree and confirm the costume design, budget and schedule with the costume supervisor and production
- Consider and include continuity requirements

#### **2. Head the costume department**

- In conjunction with the line producer and unit production manager, confirm the costume requirements, production schedule and budget with the costume supervisor
- Identify and recruit costume personnel with the required skills, and within budget, with the costume supervisor
- Consult with the costume supervisor and line producer to negotiate costume staff terms and conditions of employment, ensuring they are up to date with the current terms and conditions

### **3. Conduct costume fittings**

- Arrange convenient fitting times in line with the production schedule via second assistant director (2<sup>nd</sup> AD), ACD and costume supervisor
- Select, line up and prepare costumes and accessories
- Carry out the fitting in accordance with fitting room etiquette and procedures
- Communicate with the performers in a polite, sensitive and professional manner
- Assess requirements and recognise faults in garments make, fit and finish
- Consider costume rigging and special effects when fitting
- Confirm and communicate alterations required and the timescale to the person(s) carrying out the alteration work of
- Check costumes for correct fit following alterations
- Ensure multiple costumes, special effects and the impact for other departments are considered whilst fitting costumes and then communicated

### **4. Prepare costumes to meet production requirements**

- Select the costumes and accessories according to the script's requirements and the feedback from directors / producers
- Confirm costumes and accessories are correct, in suitable condition, and appropriate to script requirements
- Prepare the costumes in each character's story arc / order in line with the production schedule / scene order / call sheet

### **5. Establish costumes on set**

- Establish new costumes on set with the standby and confirm the specific dressing and costume requirements for the character
- Follow on-set etiquette including rules on the use of mobile phones or other modes of communication
- Assist with dressing performers and advise on how to put on and wear costumes

### **Role Specific Skills:**

- Costume design and creativity
- Knowledge in the areas of history of dress and an understanding of the construction of garments
- Script breakdown and communication of costume requirements
- Costume budget and resource management
- Liaise with other departments to discuss continuity and any changes to the design, for example, hair and make-up, and props

### **Other / Transferable Skills:**

- Communication: interpreting other's requirements and communicating the costume department's requirements clearly to cast, crew and colleagues
- Demonstrate leadership: uphold ethics and maintain respect when dealing with others. Support and encourage junior members of the team
- Teamworking: collaboration within own and with other departments
- Problem-solving: contingency planning and resolving issues with supplies and changes so that production remains on schedule. Work with the first assistant director to maintain production schedules
- Negotiation: balancing the various needs and working practices of all on the production and finding the way to collaborate effectively
- Research and analytical: planning practical requirements against brief breakdown and production vision

**Attributes:**

- Resilience and enthusiasm: adapt positively to changing work priorities and patterns, ensuring deadlines continue to be met. Proactive and explores new ideas and non-standard ways of working which will enhance and deliver the best results for the production
- Ethics and integrity: honest and principled in all of their actions and interactions. Respectful and inclusive of others, and meets the ethical requirements of their profession
- 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