

Overview of Role

VFX editors in the editorial department, are responsible for checking and cutting in VFX shots, as well as feeding back to the VFX vendors and production team. They are responsible for collating and incorporating all VFX shots into the current edit. In the early stages this may mean, storyboards, animatics, pre-visualisation (previs), post-visualisation (postvis) and live action. As post production progresses, they will collate VFX dailies submissions into the current edit. They run the VFX dailies session in collaboration with the VFX supervision team. They must carefully manage past submissions to allow VFX supervisors / directors to compare progress through iterations. They work closely with editorial and production to manage all incoming media and outgoing deliverables. The VFX editor works with the first assistant editor (1st AE) and post production supervisor (PPS), and they also oversee the work of the assistant VFX editors and trainees within their team.

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. Set up and manage the VFX cutting room

- ☐ Liaise with the PPS, 1st AE and hire companies to establish kit preferences and requirements and any special software requirements
- ☐ Confirm that the hardware and software is correct and working
- ☐ Download required software, for example After Effects, FileMaker, Aspera, Evercast, EDL (Edit Decision List) Ease, according to the production's data protection and security regulations
- ☐ Liaise with the 1st AE to set up workspaces to suit the needs of the project and preferences of the team
- ☐ Establish a clear organisational structure for media storage
- ☐ Create naming conventions for folders and files and ensure they are followed
- ☐ Liaise with the 1st AE to agree the preferred project set up and settings
- ☐ Liaise with the VFX production team to create or access the VFX server for shared storage including passwords
- ☐ Assess storage requirements and liaise with the PPS, VFX production team and 1st AE to create a system for backing up projects and media
- ☐ Set up and manage remote workflow as required
- ☐ Liaise with the PPS and VFX production team to obtain office supplies and stationery requirements

- Assess and troubleshoot issues with hardware and software

2. Set up and test the VFX editorial workflow

- Establish contact with other departments and key leads including editorial, post, VFX production and VFX vendors
- Attend workflow meetings or agree with the PPS, 1st AE, DIT, lab, VFX production team and VFX the metadata required for VFX turnovers
- Liaise with the 1st AE to devise a workflow for storing VFX related clips such as VFX plates, balls and charts
- Attend workflow meetings and agree with the VFX production team to determine the naming convention for scenes and shots
- Liaise with the editor and 1st AE to agree the preferred timeline workflow and best practice
- Attend workflow meetings or liaise with the PPS and VFX vendors to determine the turnover, the vendors specifications, delivery requirements and final delivery format
- Turn over a selection of VFX shots to test the pipeline between VFX editorial, the digital intermediate (DI) and the VFX vendors to ensure the turnover is received correctly and that the corresponding EXR files are sent from the DI to the VFX vendors
- Check that the EXR assets from the VFX vendor to the DI conform correctly
- Attend workflow meetings or liaise with the VFX production team and VFX vendors to determine the VFX submissions specifications, delivery requirements and final delivery format
- Attend workflow meetings or liaise with the VFX production team to confirm how the VFX production team would like to view vendor submissions when received
- Establish systems for the VFX editorial team including naming conventions, settings, colour coding, methods for the exchanging of sequences, clips, and other work between VFX editors and assistant VFX editors, assistant editors and editors
- Import any frame leaders, title cards, masks, or effects, and make these available to the team in an organised way, such as a toolbox bin or folder
- Ensure the team is using the tools correctly and consistently

3. Manage VFX information

- Store production information in a secure location according to the production's data protection and security regulations and procedures
- Read the dailies paperwork which may include call sheets, daily progress reports, editor's logs, facing pages, lined scripts, camera reports, shooting day reports, clip reports and LUT (lookup table) trackers

- Check continuity reports to make sure all VFX refs and plates have been accounted for
- Ensure the editor has a copy of the VFX producer's shot breakdown so that they are aware of how much budget is allocated to each sequence
- Confirm all storyboards are passed over to the editor
- Set up the VFX database or codebook using FileMaker, ShotGrid or similar software to store information about VFX shots including numbering and descriptions, vendor allocation, status, versions, elements, plates, turnover dates, submission dates and thumbnails
- Use specific settings to allow lineups and count sheets to be exported
- Update the VFX database or codebook with information about VFX shots including numbering and descriptions, vendor allocation, status, versions, elements, plates, turnover dates, submission dates and thumbnails
- Liaise with the VFX production team and PPS to source and confirm which exports go to which distribution lists in the case of restricted viewing, closed sets, or sensitive material

4. Temp VFX comps

- Interpret the script or watch the cuts to assess where VFX may be needed
- Collate existing series materials from previous seasons and episodes to source specific plates, elements, stock footage, graphics if appropriate
- Keep track of online libraries to source stock footage and graphics
- Assess the editor's briefings and watch cuts to understand the context of creative work. Make adjustments for the editor's feedback and notes
- Complete temp VFX comps including keying out green screens, background inserts, compositing, paint outs, screen inserts, resizes, split screens, retimes and repositions
- Ensure all elements and plates are easily traceable

5. Track VFX shots

- Review the timeline to note the editor's descriptions of shots which require VFX and add further detail if required or requested
- Check for new shots and liaise with the team to discuss the intention of the shot, the details and the vendor allocation
- Update the timeline and VFX database with numbers, descriptions and further information about the shot
- Check for omitted shots and inform the team; update the timeline and VFX database accordingly

- Check for changed shots and liaise with the team to discuss the changes to the requirements, parameters, scope, length, frames, plates and elements
- Update the timeline and VFX database and inform vendors of changes through sending QuickTimes (QTs) and count sheets
- Check and move the VFX numbers or off-screen descriptions to the correct shots if they have moved
- Removing descriptions as requested or if they are no longer needed to show the intention of a VFX shot due to temp VFX or submissions

6. Manage VFX spots

- Prepare the sequence for the VFX spot and check it is up to date
- Prepare the VFX cutting room or online meeting and attend the meeting to drive the Avid
- Review the episode shot by shot with the VFX production team to confirm the changes to existing shots, new shots and omitted shots and to discuss the vendor, work, time and cost requirements
- Take notes in the spot and update the timeline and VFX database with new shots, omitted shots, shot changes

7. Manage VFX exports

- Prepare the sequence for the export, checking it is up to date
- Confirm the VFX shots that can be viewed
- Prepare, check and upload exports such as VFX sequences, bidding sequences for vendors, full episodes and reference clips when required, uploading to the viewing platform, and sending to required recipients and distribution lists

8. Manage VFX turnovers

- Prepare turnovers to meet all delivery specifications including slates, burn ins, handles, metadata, naming conventions and formats
- Liaise with the VFX vendors to troubleshoot any errors or difficulties conforming
- Prepare the sequence for the turnover and check it is up to date
- Pull the plates and elements for VFX shots and prepare them in a timeline
- Create deliverables per the vendor turnovers specifications, which may include reference QTs, scan check QTs, AAFs, EDLs, bin metadata, count sheets and line ups
- Upload pull requests to the picture post facility to request that the EXRs be distributed to the VFX vendor

- Upload repulls if the shot has changed or lengthened at the head or tail and the vendors need more frames
- Update the turnover date and status of shots in the VFX database

9. Receive, review and send VFX submissions

- Import, organise and cut in version 0s and check the plate used, length, frame handles and colour
- Import organise and cut in respeeds, resizes and repositions and check that they are correct and matching the offline timeline
- Import, organise and cut in submissions and check the plates, elements, length, frame handles, colour, hooks, episode continuity, masks and check the VFX work matches the offline timeline and requirements
- Flag shots which have been delivered incorrectly to the VFX production team and the vendors
- Inform the editor and assistant editors of new submissions
- Prepare the sequence for the VFX review, and check it is up to date with the correct versions
- Check the VFX review list from the VFX production team
- Prepare the review room or online meeting, setting up remote viewing software such as Evercast, and driving the Avid where required
- Liaise with the VFX production team to action notes from the review session and update the timeline and VFX database to reflect this
- Liaise with the VFX production team to action notes from the review session
- Send an EDL update to the picture post facility and confirm if the submissions are work in progress (WIP) or final
- Send an EDL containing the final submissions for cross referencing by the DI

10. Manage the VFX editorial team

- Liaise with the PPS and VFX production team to recommend candidates for the roles of assistant VFX editors
- Interview potential candidates to assess their experience, abilities and suitability
- Create guides or checklists to outline VFX editorial workflows for submissions, turnovers, exports, imports and temp comps and pass these onto the VFX editorial team
- Develop a work plan for the team
- Confirm everyone in the team understands the scope of their work
- Manage the team's workload and working hours appropriately

- Delegate tasks to assistant VFX editors as appropriate
- Train the assistant VFX editors, assess their skills and use development plans and the assistant VFX editors toolkit to fill gaps
- Ensure the team is clear on the procedure for dealing with problems and who, how and when to report problems
- Check the work of assistant VFX editors and provide feedback on their progress

11. Archive the VFX cutting room

- Liaise with the PPS and VFX production team to create an inventory list of cutting room hardware and kit
- Establish an organisational structure for future VFX editors, VFX production teams and to navigate the projects, files and media
- Compile plates, elements, stock footage and graphics which may be required for future series
- Complete final backup of the projects, media and submissions and create a directory of the backup storage
- Create a handover guide for the VFX editors for future series as required
- Liaise with the PPS to ensure backups are stored correctly, according to the guidelines of the production company. For example, storage locations of drives or cloud storage

Role Specific Skills:

- Interpret and deliver VFX editing technical requirements for productions
- An eye for detail and thorough understanding of techniques, file formats, colour-space, software and technology relating to the live action visual effects
- Manage the VFX editorial team
- Liaise with other departments to confirm deliverables, acting as key decision maker for all VFX editorial related concerns

Transferable Skills:

- Research and analytical: planning VFX output requirements against production requirements and production vision
- Communication: interpreting other's requirements and communicating requirements to departments and colleagues
- Teamworking: collaboration within own and with other departments, liaising with post production, production and VFX vendors

- Planning: scheduling and planning practical requirements for equipment and supplies to meet VFX editorial needs
- Problem-solving: contingency planning and resolving issues with VFX deliverables so that productions remain on schedule
- Leadership and management: Lead the VFX editorial team, uphold ethics and maintain respect when dealing with others. Support and encourage junior members of the team

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
- Productivity: organises 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
- 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
- Professional development: develop an ethos to learn and seek out learning and networking opportunities, identifying those that will be most beneficial