

Stage Manager

Stage managers organise and control the running of stage productions, from organising rehearsals right through to live performances. They make sure that all technical aspects work and that everything is in the right place at the right time.

The Work

Depending on the size of the theatre and production you might have a deputy stage manager and one or more assistant stage managers.

You could be:

- setting up and co-ordinating rehearsals, including technical rehearsals
- making sure that the director, cast and crew have everything they need to make the production run smoothly
- managing budgets and working with the relevant departments to arrange costume fittings, set designs, sound, lighting and props
- keeping a record (the Prompt Script or Book) of any changes in the production – sets, lighting, sound, costumes and props for each scene
- liaising with theatre managers and front of house staff
- managing the crew and cast during performances
- giving cues to actors and lighting and sound technicians
- supervising the setting up and taking down of the set and equipment before and after the performance
- ensuring safe working practices on stage and backstage.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

There are guidelines on the websites of Equity and UK Theatre on recommended rates of pay. These depend on how many shows are in a run, the size of the theatre and whether it is rehearsal or performance. For example, the recommended weekly rate of pay (for 2025/26) for an 8-show run in a 1500+ seat theatre is £700.49 - £826.47.

Recent vacancies in the UK have advertised salaries for an assistant stage manager at £670 per week, up to stage manager at £1,100 for a 6 day week.

Conditions

- Hours can be irregular, long and include late nights and weekends.
- You may have to travel if the production goes on tour.

- You usually work indoors, in theatres and halls, although some performances take place in an open-air theatre.
- You may work on a fixed-length contract or on a freelance (self-employed) basis.

Getting In

- Entry to stage management is very competitive.
- You do not need formal qualifications for entry but increasingly entrants have a degree (SCQF Level 9-10) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in a relevant subject, such as technical and production arts, technical theatre, drama, theatre studies or music.
- The Royal Conservatoire of Scotland (RCS) offers a degree in Production Technology and Management, which includes stage management. Entry is 3 Highers.
- Courses in technical theatre and related subjects are also available at NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6), HNC (SCQF Level 7), HND and degree level.
- Entry qualifications vary depending on the level of the course, from several subjects at National 4 or 5 or the equivalent to 3 Highers. Entry to a degree usually requires 3-5 Highers plus some subjects at National 5.
- You normally need experience in amateur or student productions, to gain skills and demonstrate a genuine interest in theatre.
- The Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) website lists job vacancies.
- Look for vacancies on the websites [Mandy](#) and [Broadcast Jobs](#).

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- passionate about the theatre and performing arts
- methodical and practical
- quick-thinking and confident in making decisions
- good with people: persuasive, patient and tactful
- resourceful
- adaptable
- energetic and have good stamina for working long hours.

You should be:

- a good organiser
- able to remain calm under pressure
- able to work to deadlines
- a good leader
- creative and aware of visual effects.

Training

- Training may be on the job.
- The Stage Management Association (SMA) and UK Theatre run short training courses which help stage

managers to update and develop their skills.

- The Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) website lists training courses.
- You may have to fund your own training and professional development.

Getting On

- With further experience and skills, you could follow a promotion route from assistant stage manager to deputy stage manager, then stage manager to company or production manager.
- You could possibly go on to become a theatrical director or producer.
- You may be able to move from a smaller company to a larger company.
- You may also be able to move on to freelance work, organising conferences or events such as the Edinburgh Festival.

More Information

Take a look at [The Stage](#) online magazine for information on jobs and auditions. You can even download a Jobs and Auditions app for your iPhone.

Trainee Finder is ScreenSkills flagship new entrant programme which offers paid work placements across a range of roles in film and TV. Recruitment will usually begin around September of the year before placement. Find out more and apply online by visiting the [Film Trainee Finder website](#).

Contacts

4 Careers

Website: careers.channel4.com/4skills

X: @Channel4Skills

Facebook: www.facebook.com/Channel4Skills

Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT)

Tel: 07443 380076

Email: admin@abtt.org.uk

Website: www.abtt.org.uk

X: @theabtt

Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheABTT

Equity

Tel: 020 7379 6000

Email: info@equity.org.uk

Website: www.equity.org.uk

X: @EquityUK

Facebook: www.facebook.com/EquityUK

Stage Management Association (SMA)

Email: admin@stagemanagementassociation.co.uk

Website: www.stagemanagementassociation.co.uk

X: @SMAAssoc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/smassoc#

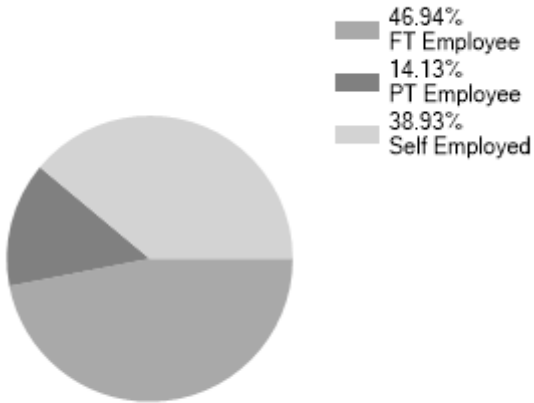
UK Theatre

Tel: 020 7557 6700

Email: enquiries@soltukt.co.uk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

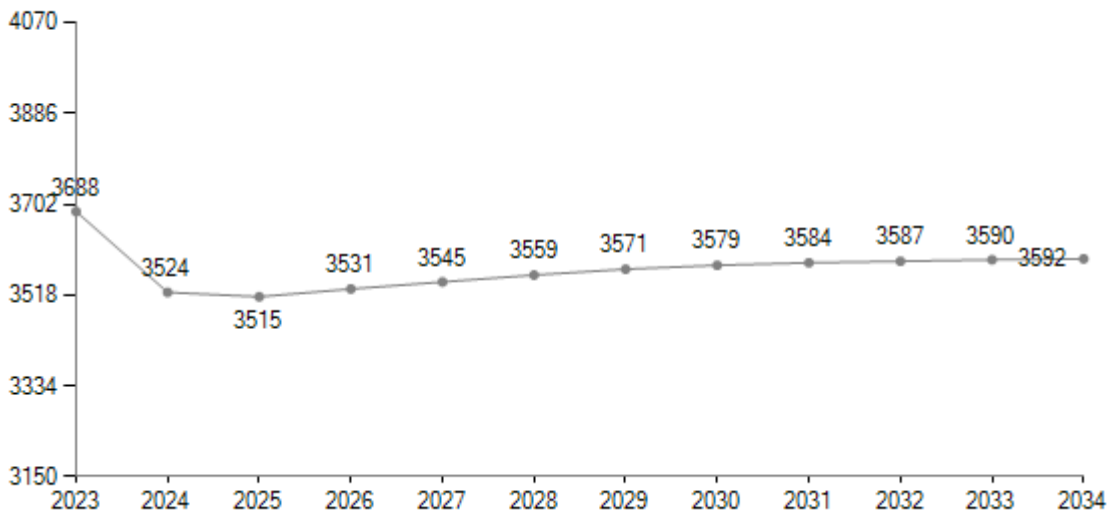


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)