

TV or Film Director

A film or TV director creates the overall visual and sound effect of a production. They use their organisational skills and technical knowledge to manage the whole production process, managing the production, technical and creative teams.

The Work

You could be:

- developing a creative vision of how the film or programme will look when finished
- commissioning or editing the script
- selecting and hiring the cast and crew
- meeting regularly with the producers and other crew members
- selecting filming locations and set designs
- planning the whole film in detail from the start, within the financial limits
- planning out the schedule within the time limits
- controlling the film set, telling all the actors, camera crew, technicians and designers what to do
- selecting shots and the music, and supervising the editing of the final version.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual salaries may vary, depending on:

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

Some directors work for little or no pay but will share in any profit the film makes.

The Broadcasting, Entertainment, Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU) website has recommended freelance rates of pay. For 2024, for 1st assistant director (not including continuing drama), these are generally as follows:

- Film production - £2,625 to £5,000+ per week
- TV production - £2,100 to £5,000 + per week.

(Rates are negotiable and exclude holiday pay).

Conditions

- You would travel about the country to different locations, often having to stay away from home.
- You work both indoors and out in all weather conditions.
- Your working hours will be long and irregular, including evenings and weekends.
- Deadlines and budgets are usually tight.

Getting In

- Most directors have a degree but you also need production experience.
- Wide experience of the film industry is more important than educational qualifications.
- Most directors start as runners or even production assistants (see [Runner](#), [Production Assistant](#)). Some start as actors. Others begin by making short independent films called 'shorts'.
- Entry is very competitive. The most common way is through making contacts in the business.
- Film magazines and websites advertise a few job vacancies, for example [Mandy](#) or [Production Base](#).

What Does It Take

You need:

- a high level of creativity and vision
- assertiveness
- good organisational skills
- strong communication skills with people at all levels
- the ability to delegate tasks and motivate others
- enthusiasm, drive and commitment
- decisiveness and good judgement
- attention to detail
- financial sense.

You should have:

- the ability to give and accept criticism
- the ability to keep calm under pressure and meet deadlines
- health and safety awareness
- up to date knowledge of industry technical standards and developments.

Training

- Training is on the job but some production companies arrange training courses.
- The British Film Institute has a directory of media courses and multimedia courses in the education section of the website.
- Both the BBC Academy and the National Film and Television School websites list several courses which may be relevant.
- Edinburgh College of Art at the University of Edinburgh offers a postgraduate degree in Film Directing.
- Edinburgh Napier University offers a postgraduate degree in Directing.

Getting On

- Most directors are freelance and work on short-term contracts for independent TV and film production companies.
- Some start up their own projects and get funding for them through Creative Scotland or other film

agencies.

More Information

If you are aged 18 or over you may be interested in [The Network](#) through Screen Education Edinburgh. The Network is held each year alongside the TV Festival in Edinburgh. If selected you would attend for four free days of masterclasses and workshops which will provide you with the skills, knowledge and contacts to start a career in TV. You can usually apply from January to May.

[Screen Education Edinburgh](#) runs the BFI Film Academy Edinburgh Short Course.

[Glasgow Film](#) runs programmes, events and activities for young people to get involved in film.

The BBC runs a number of early careers apprenticeships in different areas of media and broadcasting. Follow @BBCGETIN Instagram to stay up to date and see their [website](#).

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

BBC Academy

Website: www.bbc.co.uk/academy

British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA)

Tel: 0141 319 7559

Email: infoscotland@bafta.org

Website: www.bafta.org/programmes/uk-scholarship-programme

X: @BAFTA

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bafta

British Film Institute

Website: www.bfi.org.uk

X: @BFI

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BritishFilmInstitute

Creative Scotland

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

Website: www.creativescotland.com

Website (2): opportunities.creativescotland.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland

ScreenSkills

Tel: 020 7713 9800

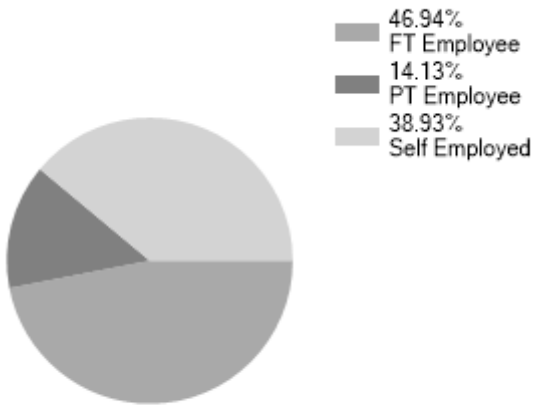
Email: info@screenskills.com

Website: www.screenskills.com

X: @UKScreenSkills

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.