

## Picture Researcher

Picture researchers find suitable photographs or illustrations for use in a wide range of media such as books, magazines, websites and television. Their employers include media or advertising companies, picture agencies or libraries, and museums or art galleries.

### The Work

You could be:

- meeting with clients to discuss their requirements and agree on a suitable fee
- reading briefs provided by clients on the subject they want illustrated
- considering the format, colour and dimensions for the image, as well as target audience and number of copies to be printed
- deciding where to look for images, including searching online image banks, picture library databases or gallery catalogues
- selecting pictures gathered from your research which are most suitable to your client's requirements and meet quality requirements
- negotiating with suppliers for the best prices on borrowing or buying images, including terms and conditions of use or return
- hiring a photographer to take any new pictures needed
- preparing captions (descriptions) or credits for images, and maybe editing images using computer software
- storing or filing pictures, and arranging the payment of invoices.

### Pay

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

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

Starting salaries for picture researchers are between £15,000 and £24,000 per year.

With experience, this could rise to around £30,000 per year. Picture editors can earn around £35,000 a year.

Freelance rates are usually per day, and vary according to the area you are working in. For example, recommended rates for books can be £160; broadcasting up to £200; glossy magazines up to £180; and national newspapers up to £180. (London Freelance Guide website, January 2020).

### Conditions

- You will work at a computer in an office, or from home if you work freelance.
- You work normal office hours, Monday to Friday, but may have to work evenings or weekends to meet

deadlines.

- You will spend a lot of time on the phone to suppliers or other agents.
- You might have to visit companies to search their picture collections.
- You may have regular deadlines to meet and work under pressure.

## Getting In

- Entry is competitive.
- Employers usually ask for a degree. Relevant degree subjects include art history, history, science, photography and languages.
- For entry to an HND course you normally require 1-2 Highers plus some subjects at National 5. For entry to a degree course you need 4-5 Highers.
- It is common for new entrants to undertake some unpaid work to strengthen their CV and improve their employment prospects.
- You will need knowledge of photo editing software, spreadsheets and online content management systems.

## What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a good visual memory and imagination
- excellent research skills
- good IT skills and knowledge of imaging software
- excellent communication skills
- persistence and good negotiation skills
- knowledge of copyright law and licensing issues
- good admin and organisation skills
- knowledge of data storage and management.

You need to be:

- able to multitask
- accurate and methodical
- able to work within a budget
- interested in photography
- well organised and able to meet deadlines.

## Training

- Training is through experience, on the job.
- The London College of Communication offers a 1-day intensive introductory course in Picture Research.
- The London School of Publishing (LSP) runs a 2-day course in Picture Research for new entrants. It is approved by the British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies (BAPLA).

## Getting On

- You can move between organisations to gain a wider range of experience.
- You could work on a freelance basis once you build up a network of contacts and clients.
- With enough experience, you could gain promotion to senior picture researcher or picture editor.

## More Information

BAPLA lists job vacancies on their website as well as individual employers such as picture libraries or art galleries.

BBC Scotland runs an apprenticeship scheme for people who are keen to get into a career in the media industry. The closing date for applications is usually sometime in April or May. The one-year apprenticeship is based in Glasgow and pays £14,250 a year. As well as learning on the job at BBC Scotland at Pacific Quay in various departments, you will study towards a Level 3 Diploma in Creative and Digital Media at a Glasgow college. Ideally applicants will have National 5 English and Maths, good IT skills and a keen interest in media. You must be at least 18 at the start date of the apprenticeship. Entry is very competitive as places are limited. The selection process includes an assessment day and tests in English and Maths. For any questions and updates by following @BBCGetin on Twitter. If you would like to find out more or check on application deadline dates visit [BBC Scotland Apprenticeships](#).

## Contacts

### British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies (BAPLA)

Tel: 020 8297 1198

Email: [enquiries@bapla.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@bapla.org.uk)

Website: [www.bapla.org.uk](http://www.bapla.org.uk)

Twitter: @baplaUK

### London School of Publishing

Tel: 020 7221 3399

Email: [enquiries@publishing-school.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@publishing-school.co.uk)

Website: [www.publishing-school.co.uk](http://www.publishing-school.co.uk)

Twitter: @LSPPublishing

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/LondonSchoolofPublishing](http://www.facebook.com/LondonSchoolofPublishing)

### Picture Research Association

Website: [www.picture-research.org.uk](http://www.picture-research.org.uk)

Twitter: @PRA\_Association

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PictureResearchAssociation](http://www.facebook.com/PictureResearchAssociation)

### Publishing Training Centre

Tel: 020 8874 2718

Email: [courses@publishingtrainingcentre.co.uk](mailto:courses@publishingtrainingcentre.co.uk)

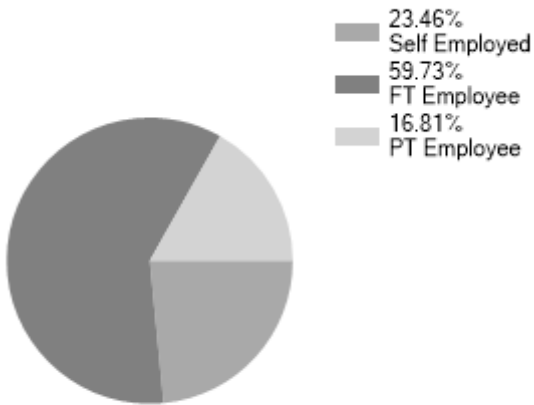
Website: [www.publishingtrainingcentre.co.uk](http://www.publishingtrainingcentre.co.uk)

Twitter: @PTCBookHouse

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/PTCBookHouse](http://www.facebook.com/PTCBookHouse)

## 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.