Producer – Radio

A radio producer is responsible for the overall content and production of a radio programme. This includes the initial research, budget, staffing and technical aspects.

They usually work in one type of programme format such as music or talk-based.

The Work

You could be:

- researching and developing new ideas for projects and programmes
- finding contributors and people to be interviewed
- writing material, scripts and choosing suitable music and archive recordings
- drawing up schedules and conducting pre-production briefings for presenters, guests and technical staff
- managing the budget
- making sure that the programme meets copyright and legal requirements
- recording, editing and presenting if needed
- replying to listeners' comments and complaints
- writing blogs and material for the programme website.

Pay

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

- the size of the organisation you work for
- whether you are freelance.

Starting salaries for trainee producers working for a small local station may range from £16,000 to £21,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £26,000 to £45,000 a year. Senior producers can earn up to £50,000 or more a year.

Many radio producers work on a freelance basis, earning a set fee for a job. This could be from around £150 up to £300 a day.

Conditions

- You might work in an office or a recording studio.
- You would work irregular hours, including evenings and weekends.
- You might have to travel and spend time away from home when on location.
- You would work under heavy pressure, having to meet tight deadlines and keep within budget.

Getting In

- Most radio producers are graduates. The degree (SCQF Level 9-10) does not have to be in a media-related

subject but this would help.
- If you are considering a media degree, check if the course includes practical radio production skills and how many graduates from the course get jobs in radio.
- You need 4-5 Highers to get on to a degree course.
- The University of the West of Scotland (Ayr Campus) offers a degree in TV, Radio and Podcast Production.
- Employers expect applicants to have practical experience of broadcasting. You can get this through college, hospital or community radio.
- Some producers start off as runners or production assistants (See Runner or Production Assistant).
- It helps to have finance skills and an understanding of trade union agreements, insurance and legal issues.
- The BBC offers unpaid work experience placements lasting from a few days to 4 weeks. You can get more details and register online at the BBC website.
- You should be able to demonstrate a genuine interest for working in radio.

Employers include the BBC, commercial radio stations, community radio and independent production companies.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- creative and able to come up with new ideas
- well organised
- assertive and determined
- able to motivate others
- able to work under pressure to meet deadlines
- a good negotiator
- an effective team player
- able to use your own initiative.

You should have:

- a good knowledge of the radio market and audiences
- a detailed understanding of law, copyright and broadcasting regulations
- strong technical and IT skills
- excellent communication skills.

Training

- Training is often on the job.
- The BBC Academy offers short courses online or face-to-face for producers.
- The Radio Academy runs a radio festival each year and masterclasses for people interested in a career in broadcasting.
- Producers need to keep up to date with technical changes in radio.

Getting On

- You may have to move to a larger radio station to progress.

- You might move from local to national radio.
- Some radio producers go on to work in TV.
- Most producers work freelance and earn a fee for each job.
- You can earn promotion to senior producer or editor, or take on a station management role.
- With experience, you might eventually set up your own production company.

More Information

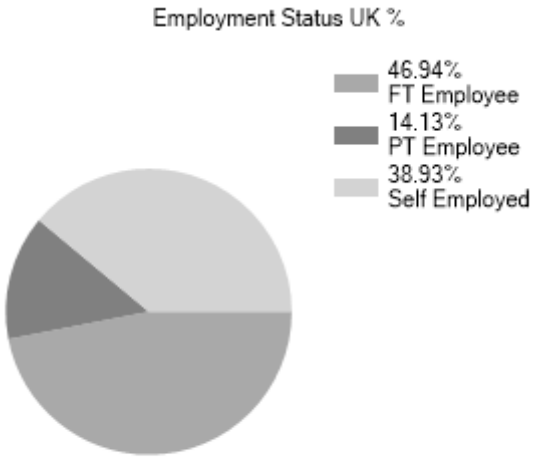
The Radio Academy website has some good careers advice.

Contacts

BBC Academy
Website: www.bbc.co.uk/academy

Radio Academy
Email: info@radioacademy.org
Website: www.radioacademy.org
X: @radioacademy
Facebook: www.facebook.com/radioacademy

Statistics



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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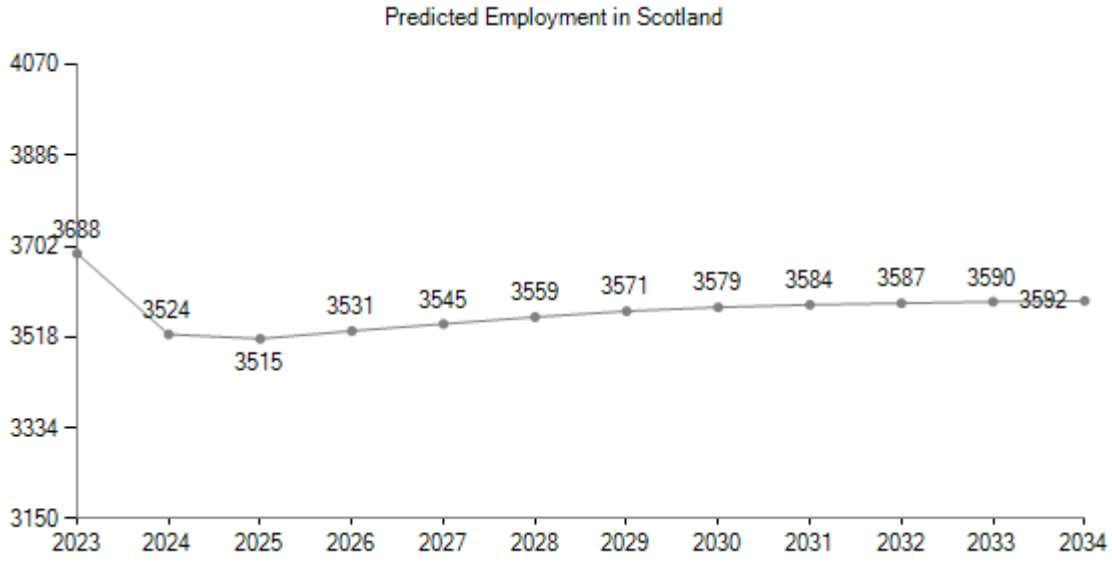

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