

Storyboard Artist

Storyboard artists work with directors to visually interpret TV, advert or film scripts. They produce a sequence of drawn or digital images, similar to comic strips, called storyboards, to visualise the story.

Storyboards are used by directors to help them achieve their vision, and to instruct other departments, such as camera crew or wardrobe, what they have to do in the production.

The Work

You could be:

- reading the script and meeting the director to discuss the mood and overall theme
- making sketches of key scenes in sequence, ensuring continuity (keeping details or the storyline connected)
- visualising scenes from the camera viewpoint, plotting character positions, angles, and other elements in each frame
- detailing shots or action scenes before filming, to avoid reshoots and exceeding the budget
- amending scenes to reflect changes in script or comments from the director
- producing 'rough' drawings where not much detail is needed, such as a computer generated film
- producing 'clean' drawings where high detail is needed, such as a TV production or overseas production
- creating final storyboards for production, such as specifying camera angles, character mood, dialogue indication or wardrobe or prop requirements
- addressing any technical or budgetary restrictions, and producing work to tight schedules.

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.

Most storyboard artists are freelance. The Broadcasting Entertainment Cinematograph and Theatre Union (BECTU) website publishes the latest rates as proposed by the British Film Designers Guild Art Department Salary Guide (2020).

- Major feature film: £2,000 - £2,650
- Medium/Small feature or International TV: £1,600 - £2,100
- TV Drama: £1,550 - £2,000
- Commercial (Day): £513.

Storyboard artists can earn from £16,000 to £20,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £30,000 to £40,000 a year.

Conditions

- You would normally work from a design studio, maybe within the art department of a production studio.
- You might work alone, or be based in a studio with an animation team or other storyboard artists.
- You spend most of your time sitting at either a drawing board or computer.
- You may spend some time onsite for planning and site development.
- You will often work under pressure, as the work turnaround for storyboarding stage can be fast. You might produce concepts and finished storyboards in a few hours or a few days, depending on the production.
- Working hours can be long and irregular with weekend work to reach deadlines.
- Many contracts are on a temporary or freelance basis.

Getting In

- Most entrants are art and design graduates, but skills and experience are more important than qualifications in this work.
- You could study for a degree, an HNC or HND in graphics, illustration, fine art or animation.
- Entry to HNC or HND courses is usually 1-2 Highers, normally including English and Art and Design. Entry to degree courses are usually 4-5 Highers, including English and Art and Design.
- Some animation and illustration courses teach storyboarding skills.
- You need a good portfolio of artwork for entry to courses and jobs and it's a good idea to have a website with an online portfolio.
- You need to understand basic film making or animation. Knowledge of film cameras and lenses can also be useful.
- You need to make contacts in the field to get work. You should visit or email advertising agencies or film studios on spec, perhaps offering to carry out work on a freelance basis in the first instance.
- You might start out as an animator or illustrator.
- You may have to do work for low budget or smaller productions for no or little pay to get experience and build up a working portfolio.

Employers rarely advertise vacancies, and most work is through built up contacts. You can look for work with broadcasting companies, advertising agencies, live event planners, production studios, video producers, or computer games companies.

What Does It Take

You should have:

- a creative mind
- excellent drawing skills
- the ability to interpret other people's ideas
- good storytelling skills
- a good understanding about film theory or production
- knowledge of layout, composition, human form and motion
- a good sense of timing, sequential drawing and editing

- the ability to use computer software.

You need:

- to be able to take instructions and accept criticism
- the ability to draw and work quickly
- a flexible approach for different styles and types of production
- good communication and presentation skills
- to be able to work to schedules and deadlines
- the ability to work either alone or as part of a team
- business skills if you are self-employed.

Training

Short courses are available in storyboarding for people with experience of working in the industry.

Getting On

- Building contacts is important to getting more work and getting on in this industry.
- With experience you could work for larger productions or clients.
- You could get work as a storyboard supervisor in larger productions.
- You could move into other areas such as comic book work or computer game design and development.

More Information

Young Scot and Creative Scotland operate the 'Nurturing Talent - Time to Shine Fund', which aims to support young people aged 11-25 and interested in developing creative or artistic skills. Both individuals and groups can apply for funding up to £1,000. For more information see the Young Scot website.

Contacts

BBC Academy

Website: www.bbc.co.uk/academy

Twitter: @BBCAcademy

Facebook: www.facebook.com/bbcacademy

BBC Recruitment

Email: careers@bbchrdirect.co.uk

Website: www.bbc.co.uk/careers/home

Twitter: @BBCCareers

British Film Institute

Website: www.bfi.org.uk

Twitter: @BFI

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BritishFilmInstitute

Creative and Cultural Skills

Tel: 020 7015 1800

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Website (2): ccskills.org.uk/careers
Twitter: @CCskills
Facebook: www.facebook.com/ccskills

Creative Scotland

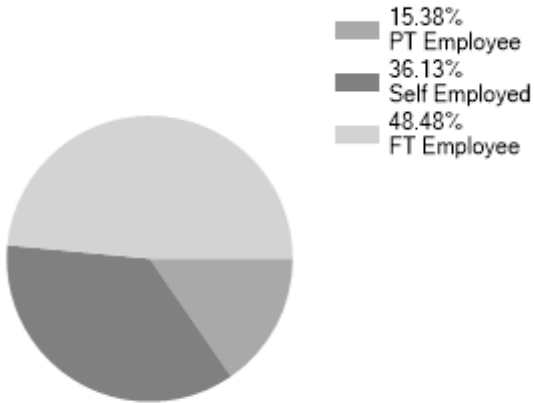
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Facebook: www.facebook.com/UKScreenSkills

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

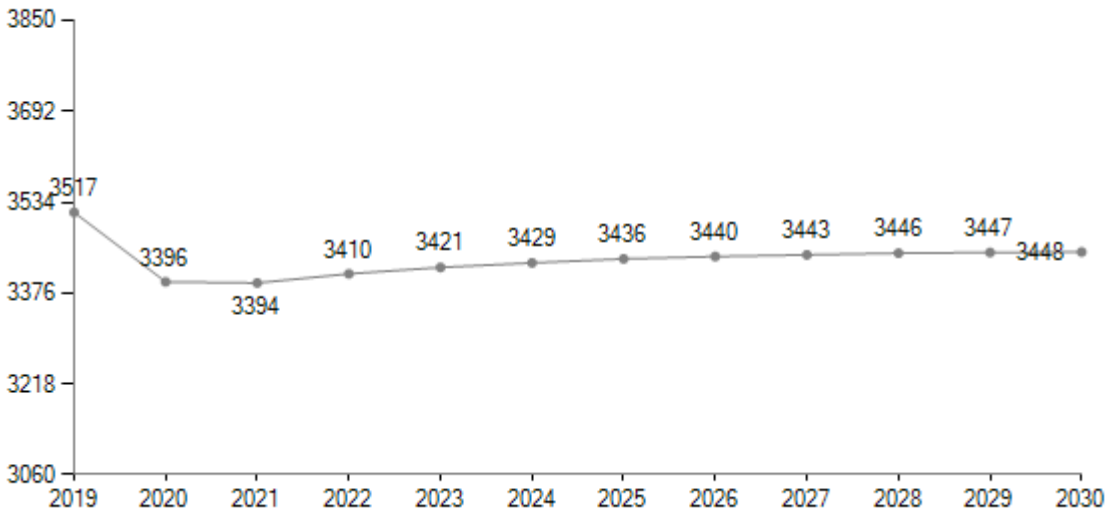


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)