

## Parent and Carer Guide

### To Careers in the Screen Industries

Whether your child has expressed an interest in a career in the UK screen industries or you are wondering whether this could be a good fit for your young person, read on to find out more about this exciting sector and how you can best support your child in exploring or pursuing a screen industry career.

This guide will help you to:

- Learn the basics around careers in the screen industries (page 2)
- Discover where to find out more about screen industry opportunities (page 6)
- Feel more confident about supporting your young person in exploring a screen industry career.



Into Film is the UK's leading charity for film in education and the community. We provide information and advice on screen industry careers, support young filmmakers, and bring the power of moving image storytelling into classroom teaching.

# Why consider a career in the screen industries?

The UK screen industries are world-renowned, adding huge value to the UK's economy, with opportunities across England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales and roles to suit all skills and interests.

The UK film sector, for example, employs around 200,000 people and is worth £1.36 billion\*, with the potential to grow even more. The UK video games sector is valued at over £7 billion, with almost 50,000 employees\*\*. All of which is great news to any young people considering a career in these sectors.

**Did you know:** the creative industries bring in more to the economy than the aerospace, life sciences, automotive and oil and gas industries combined?

## Careers in the screen industries: the basics

Film is at the heart of what we do at Into Film, but the information we provide about careers covers the wider screen industries. We work to raise awareness of roles behind the camera amongst 11–18-year-olds and the people who support them.

## What are the screen industries?

The screen industries cover:

Film

Television

VFX (visual effects)

Animation

Games

Some roles are specific to one sector. For example, a compositor (the person who creates the final image of a shot) is a specialist role in VFX (visual effects).

VFX refers to the process whereby images created using computers are mixed with live-action footage to create effects, characters or even entire galaxies to bring stories to life.

Some roles are required across the screen industries. For example, producers (the people who turn ideas into reality), writers and production accountants work across film, television, games and so on.

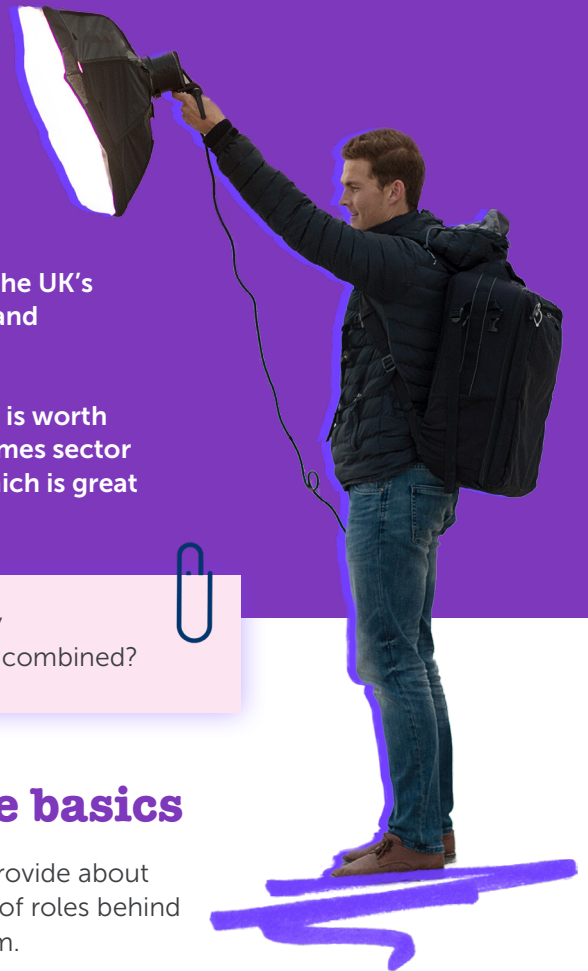
And some roles extend beyond the screen sector into other creative industries, including advertising, music, fashion or theatre.

\* [gov.uk/government/news/uks-world-class-film-sector-handed-major-jobs-and-growth-boost-by-tax-reliefs](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uks-world-class-film-sector-handed-major-jobs-and-growth-boost-by-tax-reliefs)

\*\* [equity.org.uk/advice-and-support/sector-specific-advice/video-games/working-as-a-video-game-performer/about-the-games-industry](https://equity.org.uk/advice-and-support/sector-specific-advice/video-games/working-as-a-video-game-performer/about-the-games-industry)

### Did you know?

The screen industries aren't just for creatives; there are plenty of non-creative jobs in the screen industries too. Whether your young person prefers to use practical, technical or STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) skills, there will be opportunities to explore.



For young people who are flexible about the setting they want to work in, roles that cut across the screen industry sectors can give them more choices, more variety and the opportunity to have a successful portfolio career as freelancers.

It is absolutely fine if your child is focused on a single sector or a job role, although there may be benefits to having an alternative plan in reserve to ensure their skills are always in demand.



## What types of jobs are available?

There are jobs to suit all skillsets, whether your child is creative, business-minded, practical or technical, or a mixture of all of the above.

### Have you heard of the following roles?

#### Film and TV

Accounts assistant

Assistant editor

Camera operator

Costume designer

First assistant director

Hair and make up artist

Line producer

Production assistant

Location manager

Runner

#### Games

Animator

Artist

Back-end programmer

UI designer

Game designer

Network programmer

Technical artist

3D modelling artist

#### Animation

Background designer

Production manager

Storyboard artist

2D animator

2D designer

#### VFX Post-production

Colourist

Dubbing mixer

Real-time engine coder (for virtual production)

VFX producer

Post-production producer

Facial modeller

## What is different about screen industry careers?

Here are some of the key differences between working in the screen industries and other sectors:

**Freelance working** is common in the screen industries. Freelancers find their own work and are hired to work on different contracts. In film and TV, as many as 50%\* of workers are freelance, compared to only 3%\*\* of workers in the games industry. For some young people, the freedom that comes with freelance work is very appealing. If it doesn't appeal to your youngster, there are opportunities for permanent employment too, for example, in studio management or marketing.

Believe it or not, **qualifications are not the most important factor** when applying for work in the screen industries. Young people do not need a university degree to succeed in most screen industry careers. Education and qualifications provide a way to learn more or allow time to test out career ideas, but skills and experiences tend to hold more value than a certificate alone.

### Did you know?

The screen industries are working hard to become more inclusive. If your child is from an underrepresented group, perhaps due to a disability or additional need, economic background or ethnicity, there are specialist programmes to help overcome barriers they may have faced in accessing screen industry careers so that the screen industries can be truly open to all.

\* [screenskills.com/media/6428/freelance-toolkit-2022-interactive.pdf](https://screenskills.com/media/6428/freelance-toolkit-2022-interactive.pdf)

\*\* <https://ukie.org.uk/resources/uk-games-industry-census-2022>



The screen industries have been expanding for some time, so you will find **clusters of screen industry activity across the UK**, particularly around major cities, for example, animation in Bristol or the games industry in Dundee.

To find out what is happening in your area or nation of the UK, take a look at:

- **National and regional film organisations:** [bfi.org.uk/apply-british-certification-tax-relief/national-regional-film-agencies](http://bfi.org.uk/apply-british-certification-tax-relief/national-regional-film-agencies)
- **British Film Commission Studios Map:** [britishfilmcommission.org.uk/plan-your-production/studios](http://britishfilmcommission.org.uk/plan-your-production/studios)
- **Animation UK Directory:** [animationuk.org/directory](http://animationuk.org/directory)
- **UK Games Map:** [ukie.org.uk/uk-games-map](http://ukie.org.uk/uk-games-map).



## What kind of skills and qualities are in demand?

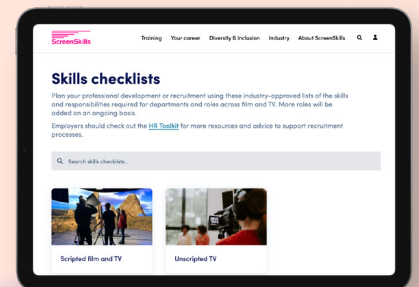
The skills needed in the screen industries vary from job to job, but these skills are commonly mentioned:

We spoke to trainees and runners in their first jobs in industry, and they shared some of the key qualities that helped them get started in the screen industries:

- **Communication**
- **Team working**
- **Problem-solving**
- **Organisation**
- **Eye for detail**

- **Enthusiasm**
- **Persistence**
- **Resilience**
- **Passion for the screen industries**

You can find more information on the skills needed for specific jobs on the ScreenSkills skills checklists at [screenskills.com/skills-checklists](http://screenskills.com/skills-checklists).



*"Some advice I have been given and I would give to others about getting into the industry would be to network as much as possible. Just to have that connection, however strong or small it is doesn't matter. If I hadn't networked, I don't think I would have gotten to where I am."*

**Ffion Llewellyn,**  
**Production Runner**

**Did you know?** The screen industries can be competitive, so what happens if your young person doesn't secure a screen industry career or decides they want to move on? The skills they develop will transfer into other creative industries and beyond. Those all-important budgeting, organisation, logistics and idea-generation skills will be valued in other jobs too.

Young people can develop their skills and hone their qualities using some of the experiences listed below.

## What experiences are helpful?

Young people often think that they need to get onto a film set or into a games company to build the skills and experience needed, but all experience is beneficial wherever it is based. Some of the things young people can do at a young age to build experience include:



- Film clubs
- Entering competitions: [Into Film Awards](#), [Into Film Film of the Month](#), [BAFTA Young Game Designer](#), [Young Animator of the Year UK](#)
- Extra responsibilities at home, school or college

### Age 13+

- [National Saturday Club](#), Film & Screen Club
- Work experience through [ScreenWorks](#) in Northern Ireland or [Speakers for Schools](#), [Virtual Work Experience](#) and [4Skills Work Experience](#) (both UK-wide)



### Age 16+

- [British Film Institute \(BFI\) Film Academy short and specialist courses](#)
- Part-time jobs in retail, hospitality, events and so on.

## What qualifications are necessary?

In addition to core subjects like English and maths, a range of subjects can be relevant, depending on the type of job that most appeals:

- Art and design
- Business and finance
- Construction trades
- Design technology
- Film, media & moving image qualifications
- Hair and beauty
- ICT, computing or games design
- Music and performing arts



A wide range of academic (GCSE, A level, National 5, Higher) and vocational qualifications (including T levels in England) or apprenticeships can provide a springboard to careers in the screen industries. It is important that young people find a pathway that suits them and how they prefer to learn.

A university degree is not a requirement to work in the screen industries. Some young people may decide to study at university level as a way to develop knowledge, build experience or test out a career direction, but it is equally valid to follow an apprenticeship or training programme or start at the bottom and work up.



## Pathways into the screen industries

Opportunities to get started in the screen industries are typically available from the age of 18.

### Apprenticeships and training programmes

Apprenticeship frameworks haven't always been designed to fit the working pattern of productions, so, in addition to apprenticeships, you will find a range of training programmes on offer in the screen industries. These offer many of the same benefits as an apprenticeship, enabling young people to earn and learn.

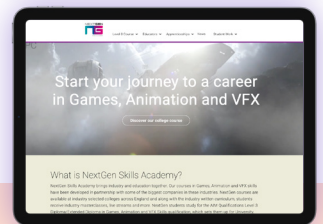
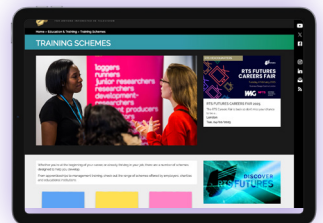
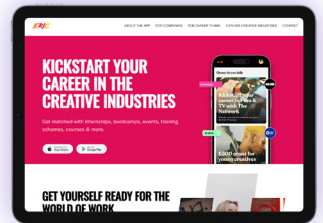
Apprenticeships and training programmes recruit throughout the year, so young people need to be proactive in seeking out opportunities.

The Get Into Film Linktree shares the latest opportunities from big (and small) names in the industry: [linktr.ee/get.into.film](https://linktr.ee/get.into.film)

If your young person is 16–25, they can look out for opportunities on the ERIC creative careers app: [meet-eric.com](https://meet-eric.com)

For further information, see:

- ➔ ScreenSkills: [screenskills.com/training/apprenticeships/where-can-i-find-an-apprenticeship](https://screenskills.com/training/apprenticeships/where-can-i-find-an-apprenticeship)
- ➔ Royal Television Society: <https://rts.org.uk/education-and-training-pages/training-schemes>
- ➔ Next Gen Skills Academy: [nextgenskillsacademy.com](https://nextgenskillsacademy.com)



*"I would say the main thing that I wish I could go back to uni for is to work more on student projects. I feel like a lot of employers don't really care about what grade you got from university, it's what have you made and what skills have you developed."*

**Matthew Stanciu,  
Post-Production Trainee**

**Did you know?** For film and TV production roles, learning to drive is highly beneficial.

### University courses

Beyond searching for courses on UCAS (Universities and Colleges Admissions Service), how will you and your child know that the university course they are keen on will help to prepare them for a career in the screen industries?

There are various accreditation processes to ensure universities and colleges are producing graduates with industry-specific skills. Look out for accreditation from ScreenSkills or TIGA (Independent Games Developers' Association) and check how your local BFI Skills Cluster is working with local universities and colleges. Schemes like these all help to ensure clearer pathways from education into industry.

University application deadlines fall in late January for courses starting the following autumn. Help with the application process should be available from your young person's school or college. Find out more at [ucas.com](https://ucas.com).

### Straight to work

If your youngster has a bit of experience under their belt (not necessarily screen-related) and feels mature enough to get started in the world of work, they can apply for work as a runner, trainee or assistant. These are paid roles to help them get started. It could be beneficial to apply to training programmes and apprenticeships too. The national and regional film organisations' webpages [bfi.org.uk/apply-british-certification-tax-relief/national-regional-film-agencies](https://bfi.org.uk/apply-british-certification-tax-relief/national-regional-film-agencies) could provide a starting point in seeking runner or trainee positions.



## Examples of pathways include:

### Researcher

**BFI Film Academy**  
(aged 16)

Studied English and history at university; worked as a production runner before getting promoted into the role of researcher.



### Production carpenter

**Carpentry apprenticeship**  
(aged 17)

Built sets for local theatre group; found role as a production carpenter, now building sets on feature films.



### Editor

**Studied TV and film production at college**

Worked part-time in a café; undertook free industry training; found a place in a training programme as an assistant editor.



## Finding the right fit

The good news is that young people don't need to make any big decisions about specific screen industry roles while still in school or college. Many pathways into the screen industries are interchangeable, and people might choose to change direction once they have had a chance to experience a role or work setting and find out what they enjoy and what they don't enjoy.



**Together with your child watch TV and films and play games. These could be old TV shows, foreign language films or independent games. You do not need to spend lots of money watching or playing the latest blockbusters.**

- Encourage your child to think critically about the experience. What aspects of the film, show or game particularly appeal to them? What don't they like? How would they have made it differently?
- Watch the credits of a film, TV show, animation or game. What roles do you see? Find out more about roles that appeal on the ScreenSkills website (listed below). If your child loves the editing, character design or camera work, use the credits to find out who was responsible, and then look out for other things they have worked on.
- Why not encourage them to have a go at filmmaking, animation or making a simple game? They could get together with friends and try out different roles. The competitions on page 5 could be the next step.

**If your child is in school or college, encourage them to get further help and information from their careers adviser.**

**You can find out more about screen industry careers through the organisations listed below.**



[linktr.ee/get.into.film](https://linktr.ee/get.into.film)

**Get Into Film** (part of Into Film) provides careers content by young people for young people, offering advice and top tips for pursuing a career in the screen industries.

→ [screenskills.com](https://screenskills.com)

→ [accessvfx.org](https://accessvfx.org)

→ [ukie.org.uk/students](https://ukie.org.uk/students)

→ [intogames.org](https://intogames.org)

→ [discovercreative.careers](https://discovercreative.careers)