

INDUSTRY BRIEFING:

# THE UK FILM AND TV INDUSTRIES



**Skills gaps and training provision**

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# What's the report about?

The report looks at the skills challenges facing the film and television industries, and the training currently available to people who work in these industries, or who want to.

It focuses on:

- skills gaps and shortages
  - 'soft' vs professional skills
  - continuing professional development
  - industry knowledge and working practices
- training provision
  - defining training
  - clarity in the industry about training
  - value and quality of training
- career pathways
  - progression routes
  - formalisation and accreditation



# Context and new insights

It is estimated that by 2025 film and high-end television production will need between

**15,130**

and **20,770**

more full-time-equivalent employees

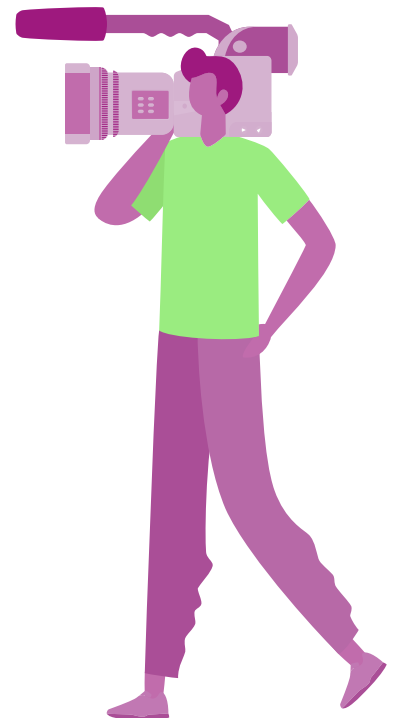
The report draws on interviews with **training providers, academics, new entrants to the sector** and **production company representatives**.

It aims to:

- understand **what is meant by 'training'** in different contexts – do people undertake training to get a job, learn about the industry, do their jobs better?
- map the use of training in the screen industries
- understand more about the screen industries' **training economy** – does provision match need?
- identify **opportunities for the Screen Industries Growth Network (SIGN)** to provide training in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

Historically, there have been a number of **skills challenges** in the screen industries. These range from difficulty in retaining skilled workers to the pitfall of promoting workers early in their careers, before they are ready. Brexit and the COVID-19 pandemic have worsened existing issues and created new ones.

**The UK screen industries are growing steadily**, and it is estimated that by 2025 film and high-end television production will need between 15,130 and 20,770 more full-time-equivalent employees (ScreenSkills, 2022).



## What next / action points?

Employers in the screen industries have repeatedly highlighted skills gaps and shortages.

**Training providers, employers (such as production companies) and higher education institutions (HEIs)** need to work together more closely to improve the training on offer and stop these gaps being repeated as new people are recruited.

The report recommends that they work with national and regional schemes that aim to do these things:

- **Develop a taxonomy of training** – that is, clearly outline what training is available and what would be most appropriate for each worker, and explain what training is relevant to different career pathways. This taxonomy needs to be adopted by training providers and HEIs and used by the industry.
- **Develop a regional signposting service** to offer training and careers advice to new entrants and the existing workforce. This service should collate information about skills gaps and needs, training provision and career progression.
- **Thoroughly explore how a shared apprenticeship model might work for the screen industries.** This model would need to take into account both employees' needs and regional industry requirements.

## Develop a taxonomy of training

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## Work together

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training on offer



# Forecasted increased in crew employment



52,300 FTEs in 2021



68,310 FTEs in 2025

ScreenSkills, 2022

\* Each figure represents approx. 10,000 FTEs

FTE = Full-time equivalent

A common and urgent complaint from production companies is that **graduates are not equipped** with the skills they need to be ready for work in the screen industries. But educators in universities and colleges point out that they have to satisfy the expectations of multiple stakeholders, including research councils and students.

This report highlights how **confusing** training provision in the sector can be. There is a broad range of training options, from webinars to master's degrees, and it is not always clear how they relate to career pathways.

Also, using the term 'soft skills' can downplay the importance of communication, teamworking and interpersonal skills. The report identifies the lack of these professional skills as an ongoing issue, and not only for new entrants. In fact, ongoing workplace issues such as long working hours, toxic behaviour and gender biases mean that soft skills are required in all areas of the industry.

**Apprenticeships** are a potential route into the sector, if they can be adapted to meet industry needs. The consensus among several professionals who contributed was that an apprenticeship scheme like the BBC's would give new entrants the chance to learn about the industry and develop practical skills.

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## About the authors

**Bethan Jones** is a research associate at SIGN (University of York). Her research examines training provision and employment expectations in the screen industries and explores the role of fan tourism in encouraging visitors to filming locations.

**Jon Swords** is a senior research fellow at the University of York and academic lead for research on XR Stories and SIGN. Jon's work examines the geographies and working practices of the creative industries.

**Jude Brereton** is Co-Director of SIGN and Professor in Audio and Music Technology at the University of York. Her research interests are in interactive acoustic environments for musical performance.

## Links / further reading

Read the full report:

<https://screen-network.org.uk/publication/skills-and-training-provision-in-the-uk-film-and-tv-industries/>

Read more about the key skills challenges facing scripted film and high-end television production:

<https://www.bfi.org.uk/industry-data-insights/reports/bfi-skills-review-2022>

Find out more about the challenges and opportunities in the scripted production workforce in the UK's nations and regions:

<https://www.screenskills.com/media/6421/scripted-production-nr-skills-shortages-report-final-7-10-22-v3.pdf>

Read about the skills and training that UK film and high-end TV need to support their production boom:

<https://www.screenskills.com/news/new-forecast-of-skills-and-training-needs-to-support-uk-film-and-high-end-tv-production-boom/>

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