DISCOVER!

creative careers

Your Route In Creative Careers Quick Starter Guide

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Introduction

Creative Careers – How to Get Started

*A quick starter guide for
young job seekers aged 16–24.*

Creative careers include jobs in film and TV, music, marketing, advertising, social media, digital content, CreaTech, design, games and live events. Most people start with small steps, build their skills and experience through working in a variety of roles, building up their network step by step. There is no single pathway in.

You do not need everything figured out to begin. What matters is trying things out, building up examples and showing you are ready to learn and contribute. Employers value practical skills, reliability and willingness to learn.

This guide shows realistic starting roles, potential entry routes, starting roles and links to free training that you can use straight away to boost your career.

Who is this guide for?

- **Aged 16 – 24**

- **Looking for training or work in creative industries**

- **Curious about creative careers**

- **No experience needed to start**

- **Practical next steps included**

What counts as a creative career

Creative industries include:

Film and TV

Design and Visual Work

Music and Audio

Games and Animation

Marketing and Advertising

Events and Live Production

Social and Digital Content

CreatTech

Roles in these industries can be team-based, freelancer, office based, on-location project-based. They employ people in creative, technical, practical and business roles. This offers you lots of variety that can suit your skill set, interests and how you want to work.

- Freelance is common in dance, events, music and heritage
- Fixed-term contracts are common in museums, venues and cultural organisations
- Office-based roles are common in marketing, advertising and design

You do not always need a degree. Skills, attitude and effort matter.

Examples of early entry roles in the creative industries:

- Account Assistant
- Archive or Collections Assistant (heritage)
- Assistant Producer (radio / audio)
- Camera Operator
- Content Creator
- Designer
- Event Crew
- Front of House / Technical Crew (live events)
- Gallery Assistant (heritage)
- Junior Marketing Assistant (creative agencies)
- Junior Motion Designer
- Lighting Technician
- Marketing Executive
- Production Assistant
- Runner
- Social Media Manager
- Sound Technician
- Studio Assistant
- UX Tester (User Experience)
- Video Editor

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Some roles are freelance, some are employed and some begin in junior or assistant roles.

Not all creative jobs are creative roles

Creative companies also hire for practical and business roles. These are real ways into the industry.

Technical and site roles include electricians, studio crew and IT support. Business and office roles include accountants, HR, project coordinators, operations and finance assistants. Support and logistics roles include runners, catering, drivers, facilities staff and health and safety support.

Many people enter this way and move across as they build up their skills and network.

Ways into the industry

**There are lots of ways to get started.
You are not behind if your route looks different.**

Common entry routes include:

- Apprenticeships
- Traineeships
- Work experience placements
- Short training programmes
- College courses
- Entry-level jobs
- Freelance starter projects
- Self-built portfolio work

What to expect:

Creative industries can be competitive. Early roles are often short term or project based.

Most people build experience step by step through small roles, project work and their contacts. Starting small is normal and part of how people progress.

How do you find opportunities

Opportunities are found in different ways, so it's important to stay proactive and organised when looking for work. Roles can come through referrals and your reputation from past projects, evens and workshops, networking, specialist platforms and communities like **ERIC** or by some applying directly to employers.

More than one path works.

Most creative industries are built from lots of small companies rather than a few large employers. Studios, agencies, venues, production companies, creative organisations and cultural institutions have small teams and hire people per project. Because work is project-based, short contracts and freelance roles are common.

Apprenticeships and training

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Apprenticeships are paid roles with training included. You earn while you learn and gain recognised qualifications.

Short skills programmes and bootcamps are often free or funded and focused on job readiness. Many are linked directly to employers. These are often found on LinkedIn or industry websites.
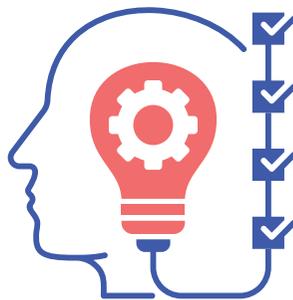
Always check trusted industry sites first before paying for private courses.

What employers look for

At entry level, employers are not expecting you to know everything yet.

They are looking for:

- **Turning up on time**
- **Being reliable**
- **Willingness to learn**
- **Communication**
- **Teamwork**
- **Taking feedback**
- **Finishing tasks properly**

Attitude and behaviour matter as much as technical skills and knowledge when starting out.

Getting started practically

Work experience and placements should give you real tasks and feedback structured and skills-based.

The most useful placements give you real work, learn transferable skills and provide constructive feedback, not just watching someone do a job.

Freelance work is common but usually begins small. Use it to build your skills and portfolio examples. Try to keep your early costs low and grow your income over time.

Small projects count.

If you do not have experience yet

You can still show evidence of your skills and interest using:

- **School, college or university projects**
- **Things you have made yourself**
- **Online content**
- **Community projects**
- **Volunteering**
- **Practice briefs**

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On your CV put your skills near the top. Include a projects section and links out to any work you have online. List equipment and software that you know how to use. Show practical outputs.

Apprenticeships and traineeships exist across screen, live performance, cultural, heritage, marketing and design.

Training routes vary by sector, but entry principles are similar.

Your 4 week creative careers action plan

WEEK 1
Explore

- Research the sectors you are most interested in
- Pick three roles that sound interesting to you through the **Discover Creative Careers role finder**
- Read role profiles and day-in-the-life guides
- Write down the skills needed for each role and ask yourself whether you've got them or you need to work on them

WEEK 2
Build

- Create a one-page CV and add your skills and experience
- Create a simple portfolio folder or Instagram account and add some project examples
- Download the **ERIC app** and setup your profile

WEEK 3
Connect & Learn

- **Complete the Discover! Creative Careers e-learning module**
- Create or improve a LinkedIn profile, adding examples and links of your creative work
- Speak with your work coach about creative jobs
- Research other e-learning modules you can take on ScreenSkills

WEEK 4
Apply & Improve

- Apply to three creative opportunities
- Ask for feedback on your portfolio from someone in your network
- Network through LinkedIn and add some companies and/or freelancers
- Search ScreenSkills to learn more about creative opportunities
- **Keep exploring and building on your progress**

Next steps

After the webinar:

- Speak with your Jobcentre or DWP work coach
- Use Discover! Creative Careers tools
- Use ScreenSkills training and e-learning
- Build small project examples
- Apply consistently and improve

Creative careers grow through action, practice and persistence.
Small steps taken regularly make a real difference.

SCAN OR CLICK HERE TO VIEW A PAGE OF USEFUL LINKS ON OUR WEBSITE

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Further Resources Across the Creative Industries

Links:

https://discovercreative.careers/students-and-parents/
free-elearning-module-introduction-to-the-creative-industries/

https://discovercreative.careers/events-resources/

https://discovercreative.careers/explore/#/

https://discovercreative.careers/students-and-parents/next-steps/

https://www.screenskills.com

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