POST PRODUCTION TECHNICAL OPERATOR

Reference Number: ST0696

Details of standard

Occupation summary

This occupation is found in the media industries and covers the Post Production area for Film, TV and Advertising. Post-production is effectively the final step in the making of a film or television programme and associated products, is the process of refinement and transition of productions’ raw materials into a finished product before distribution and release to the public. Post Production Technical Operators are employed by audio and picture post-production companies, visual effects companies, broadcasters and by film and TV production companies who have their own facilities.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to provide support, assistance and delivery within the technical support operation of a post-production company. Core duties include (but are not limited to) first line technical and edit support for the workflow and lifecycle of the content in post-production, media backup, ingest and export. The core objective of the role is to ensure that the technical support operations are fulfilled effectively and efficiently to the technical specification provided. Each company engaged in post-production, of whatever size, employs Technical Operators to prepare, manage and deliver the assets and creative media handled during the post production process.

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with creative colleagues in editing, visual effects or production teams, as well as clients. This is a junior position into the Master Control Room (MCR) department, the role is often shift based and may involve working alone or as part of a larger team; they will report to senior technical managers.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for applying technical knowledge and understanding to the post production process in film, TV and Advertising. Post-Production Technical Operators are given high levels of responsibility with sensitive material, working to specific and varied technical standards within time-limited deadlines. In this role, they are responsible for assessing quality of content and carrying out corrective measures where possible. They have to be able to analyse source material/content and interpret and apply technical specifications to this. Although it is a technical role, there is a need to have an eye for the creative processes in post production such as editing, audio mixing and colour grading. The roles require an understanding of current digital file-based workflows as well as legacy media. Creative personnel in picture editing, grading and audio dubbing suites depend on the picture and audio files produced by technicians in this role.

They are known by a variety of job titles, depending on the specific services provided by their employer, however the core technical understanding that they use applies across the industry.

Typical job titles

https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/post-production-technical-operator/
Typical job titles include Technical Operator, MCR Operator, Grade/Edit Assistant, Offline Assistant, Data Wrangler, Digital Imaging Technician (DIT), Dailies Operator, Quality Control Operator, Media Operator and Input/Output Operator.

### Occupation duties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty</th>
<th>Criteria for measuring performance</th>
<th>KSBs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 1</strong> Work effectively as part of a team, supporting creative colleagues to deliver the clients’ vision of the final programme, film or commercial</td>
<td>To be recognised as a productive and effective colleague delivering excellent service to clients and colleagues on every project.</td>
<td>K1 K2 K3 K4 K5 S1 S2 S3 S4 S5 B1 B2 B3 B4</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 2</strong> Preserve or create audio, video and data content at the best quality possible as it passes through the post production department, in line with industry standards and client requirements</td>
<td>Demonstrate an ability to apply the knowledge and skills required, in a time pressured environment, across many projects simultaneously</td>
<td>K6 K7 K8 K9 K10 S6 S7 S8 S9 S10 B5 B6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 3</strong> Ingest and export media to/from the post production environment</td>
<td>Demonstrate an ability to work accurately to agreed workflows, in a time pressured environment, across many projects simultaneously</td>
<td>K11 K12 K13 K14 K15 K16 S10 S11 S12 S13 S14 S15 S16 S17 B7 B8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 4</strong> Receive and dispatch media from/to external organisations</td>
<td>Consistently, accurately and securely manage media movements in and out of the company documenting and communication to all relevant parties in an accurate and timely fashion</td>
<td>K16 K17 S18 S19 S20 B3 B8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 5</strong> Manage media on post-production storage systems, to ensure that the right content is available at the right time, to the right client.</td>
<td>Consistently, accurately and securely manage media storage for all project according to company requirements</td>
<td>K18 K19 K20 K21 K22 S21 S22 S23 S24 S25 S26 S27 B1 B3 B10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 6</strong> Support creative colleagues in edit suites</td>
<td>Work effectively behind the scenes, with colleagues and clients to ensure smooth, consistent and efficient operation of editing services</td>
<td>K23 K24 K25 S27 S28 S29 S30 B7 B8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Duty 7</strong> Support creative colleagues in picture and sound finishing suites</td>
<td>Work effectively behind the scenes, with colleagues and clients</td>
<td>K26 K27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ensure smooth, consistent and
efficient operation of finishing
suites within appropriate technical
boundaries

Duty 8 Perform formal Quality
Control Assessments to produce
reports on the technical quality of
sound, pictures and data of finished
content

The ability to produce concise and
accurate formal reports, referencing
appropriate standards, to meet
client requirements.
Communicating findings to both
clients and colleagues accurately
and in a diplomatic manner.

Duty 9 Conform to company Health
and Safety policies, company
processes and procedures

Adheres to Health & Safety
Legislation and organisational
policies and processes

Duty 10 Handle legacy media
content

Demonstrate an ability to integrate
legacy material into contemporary
workflows

KSBs

Knowledge

K1: Understand the purpose of post-production within the end-to-end production process

K2: Understand the commercial context of post-production with the film, TV and advertising industry

K3: Understand the importance of agreed workflows and how to adapt these to meet the needs of a production

K4: Understand the importance of accurate, effective and timely communication with own team, other departments and customers to ensure efficient progress of the work in hand

K5: Know the relevant health and safety legislation and company policies to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, colleagues and customers

K6: Understand the principles of video signals for film and TV in the digital and analogue domains including: resolution, sampling, colour science, display technologies and emerging and legacy video formats/standards

K7: Understand the principles of audio signals in the digital and analogue domains including: Signal path basics, mono, stereo, surround sound, object-based audio, audio levels and loudness

K8: Understand the use of metadata and other forms of content documentation
K9: Understand the use of timecode and other frame labelling protocols

K10: Understand why it is business critical to use unambiguous labelling of content, clock numbers and file naming conventions

K11: Understand the importance of agreed workflows and how these may be adapted to meet the bespoke needs of a production

K12: Know and understand the structure of and appropriate application of, audio and video file formats in common use in production, post-production and delivery

K13: Know the formats that are used for still images and graphics held as bitmaps or vector images, and which file formats are used for moving images held as sequential single frame files

K14: Understand the principles of encoding, transcoding and compression of digital audio and video

K15: Understand the capabilities of different connection standards for portable storage devices

K16: Understand the principles of high speed file transfer across Local Area Networks (LAN) and Wider Area Networks (WAN)

K17: Know and understand the protocols for secure, audited receipt and dispatch of content via physical and electronic transfer

K18: Understand the principles of computer systems, IP networks and shared storage systems as applied in post production

K19: How media is managed throughout the data lifecycle including production storage, shared storage, nearline storage and archive, whether on premises or in the cloud

K20: Understand the bandwidth requirements and disk configurations necessary to ensure reliable playback and record performance at the required resolution for one or more clients from shared storage or directly connected storage

K21: Understand the principles of good digital content governance, resilience, RAID (redundant array of inexpensive disks), security, confidentiality

K22: Understand the value of media content to the business and its customers

K23: Understand the principles of non-linear editing systems

K24: Understand the functional role, capabilities and limitations of the equipment used in offline editing

K25: How to provide operational assistance and first-line support to creative personnel and problem solve within agreed governance constraints

K26: Understand the principles of non-linear picture and sound finishing systems

K27: Understand the functional role, capabilities and limitations of the equipment used in online editing, colour grading and audio dubbing

K28: Understand the technical standards and customer specifications used for UK and international delivery of programmes, films and commercials to cinema, TV broadcast and online distribution platforms
K29: Understand the requirements of international productions to aid localisation, such as textless backgrounds and audio stems.

K30: Understand the correct environment in which to perform quality control and assessment

K31: Understand the European Broadcasting Union (EBU) classification of quality issues and the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) 5-point quality assessment scale

K32: Know and understand the regulations to comply with in regard to flashing images and stimuli causing photo sensitive epilepsy

K33: Understand the regulations and specifications for on-screen text and graphics such as: safe areas, minimum text height and minimum durations for legal information in commercials

K34: Understand the importance of intelligibility of dialogue and how this is impacted by a complex range of factors, especially age-related hearing loss

K35: Know and understand the relevant health and safety legislation and company policies

K36: Know and understand legacy video standards such as standard definition PAL and NTSC and their conversion to contemporary standards

K37: Know and understand legacy video and audio tape formats

K38: Understand the implications of using legacy formats in contemporary workflows

Skills

S1 Work in line with agreed workflows, adapting to operational changes as they occur

S2 Multitask on simultaneous projects, often for different clients, prioritising the work to ensure that all tasks are completed on schedule

S3 Analyse and interpret the work order and technical specification to complete the scheduled tasks

S4 Use process documentation and work order reporting systems for efficient, accurate and timely communication with other departments about the progress of the work in hand

S5 Work accurately with a high degree of attention to detail

S6 Analyse and advise on the quality of audio, video and data throughout the post production process to colleagues, customers and suppliers

S7 Follow post production processes to ensure the necessary quality is achieved

S8 Access and interpret the relevant information pertaining to technical specifications and client requirements, and apply to the post production process

S9 Use appropriate technical vocabulary to document and communicate compliance with, or exceptions from, technical standards

S10 Assimilate information from multiple sources and apply to task in hand

S11 Ensure data is transferred securely between client supplied sources and post production storage systems, performing data integrity and virus checks
S12 Ingest and export media content and metadata to/from post-production systems, syncing the audio to video and applying colour transforms (LUTs) as required

S13 Arrange media content in agreed folder structures, using consistent and unambiguous folder and file naming conventions

S14 Prepare graphics and still images for ingest using software such as Photoshop where basic manipulation is required.

S15 Encode and transcode audio and video data to required specifications

S16 Export finished content or work-in-progress with metadata from post-production systems to required specifications and naming conventions

S17 Provide technical advice to clients and colleagues on an appropriate file specification for a given requirement

S18 Dispatch and receive physical assets to/from external organisations and audit the process

S19 Use file transfer software for fast, secure and audited delivery of assets to external destinations

S20 Communicate work progress to colleagues and clients as appropriate

S21 Manage access by clients to shared storage systems according to company protocols

S22 Ensure data integrity when moving media between storage systems

S23 Backup, archive and restore media, sequences and metadata according to company practice

S24 Safely delete media as instructed and complying with company protocols

S25 Maintain content security measures, both electronic and physical as required by the employer and their clients

S26 Enact business continuity procedures

S27 Prioritise the workload to ensure the scheduled tasks are completed on time, liaising with colleagues and clients

S28 Provide frontline operational support to clients in editing suites, to ensure that they can find and work with their media

S29 Take ownership to resolve and/or escalate faults/incidents to the appropriate person, within agreed governance constraints

S30 Connect and set-up post production editing equipment using appropriate cables and connectors

S31 Perform and check data conforms of sequences prior to colour grading or online editing

S32 Transfer picture data between grading and editing systems, ensuring the data integrity of content and sequences is maintained

S33 Relink ingested media to updated sequences as editorial changes occur

S34 Prepare and transfer audio data to the dubbing suite
S35 Perform basic editing functions necessary for the preparation of media and sequences for creative processes, or for formatting of finished content for delivery (e.g. adding line-up signals, idents, patching in QC fixes, audio laybacks)

S36 Analyse and interpret the results of reports from audio and video test equipment

S37 Consistently assess and identify faults in content, using the correct terminology to accurately describe and record them

S38 Use own judgement and discretion to decide what is acceptable and what is not in relation to quality control, depending on the context of the material, its intended use and the required technical specifications and customer requirements

S39 Deliver accurate and concise Quality Assessment Reports with clear indications of mandatory failures, advisory warnings and client approved exceptions

S40 Provide technical advice on remedial action to correct faults identified

S41 Communicate findings to both clients and colleagues accurately, and in a diplomatic manner

S42 Comply with company Health and Safety policies and practices, identifying, mitigating and reporting any incidents or risk to the appropriate person

S43 Consistently work in a safe manner for self, colleagues and clients.

S44 Use appropriate legacy media physical handling procedures

S45 Carry out basic operation of videotape recorders and audio recorders

S46 Digitise tape content into editing systems

S47 Playout finished content from editing systems to tape

S48 Provide technical advice to clients and colleagues on the implications of using legacy format in contemporary workflows

**Behaviour**

B1: Displays a strong work ethic and commitment to meet the standards required - upholding ethical and professional standards

B2: Demonstrates a passion for post production, the media industry and its productions - proactively keeping up to date with latest developments within the industry

B3: Maintains company and customer confidentiality, acting as an ambassador for their employer

B4: Acts in a manner that supports the commercial customer relationship acting as an ambassador for their employer

B5: Demonstrates attention to detail and not willingly accepting second best; whilst at the same time being pragmatic about balancing client expectations against the available time and budget

B6: Proactively keeping up to date with latest developments within the industry

B7: Thinks creatively and logically to solve technical issues - contribute to a process of continual improvement of workflow and technique
B8: Delivers good customer service in a creative environment

B9: Balances the quality threshold which it is practical to achieve within time and budget constraints, and the customer expectations

B10: Works with a high level of sustained concentration and attention to detail

B11: Works safely to ensure a safe working environment for themselves, colleagues and customers

**Qualifications**

**English and Maths qualifications**

Apprentices without level 2 English and maths will need to achieve this level prior to taking the End-Point Assessment. For those with an education, health and care plan or a legacy statement, the apprenticeship's English and maths minimum requirement is Entry Level 3. A British Sign Language (BSL) qualification is an alternative to the English qualification for those whose primary language is BSL.

**Additional details**

**Occupational Level:** 4  
**Duration (months):** 12

**Review**

This standard will be reviewed after three years.

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**Find an apprenticeship**

Postcode (optional)

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**Version log**

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<td>Assessment plan and funding band published</td>
<td>Not available</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11/04/2019</td>
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