

Careers in Music Publishing

Information for teachers and careers advisors

The music publishing industry generates over a quarter of the UK music industry's £2.6 billion in export revenue.

Music publishers play an important role in the development of new music, by taking care of the business side of rights and distribution, investing in new creative talent, and helping develop and sustain the careers of music creators.

The work of music publishers is vast and diverse. It ranges from finding talented songwriters and composers and commissioning new music, to licensing of works, editing, producing and distributing sheet music and promoting music to performers, broadcasters and record companies.

Every Copy Counts has spoken to members of the Music Publishers Association for guidance for students on the sorts of jobs available within the music publishing industry.

As well as the types of roles listed below, the music publishing industry has need of music fans who are talented in other areas such as digital, finance, marketing, IT and HR/people skills. Whatever you are good at, if you love music and want a career in a dynamic industry, read on!



This guide has been compiled with support from the Music Publishers Association and its members.

**EVERY
COPY
COUNTS**

ARTISTS & REPERTOIRE (A&R)

WHAT IS IT?

A&R is the area of music publishing that is responsible for finding new artists and music creators, and overseeing the development of their artistic careers. Promotion is similar to A&R but in contemporary classical music.

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

Passion for and knowledge of new music or contemporary classical music; understanding of the production process; great people skills; specialism in a music genre; patience!

TYPES OF JOBS

Head of A&R; A&R Manager; A&R Scout; Promotion Manager; Promotion Assistant; Administrator

“LOVE MUSIC! GO TO GIGS, KEEP UP WITH EMERGING ARTISTS – FIND OUT WHAT IS THE NEXT BIG THING.” SIMON ANDERSON, AUDIO NETWORK

“LISTEN TO LOTS OF MUSIC – DON’T BE AFRAID TO HAVE STRONG OPINIONS!”

SIMON PLATZ, BUCKS MUSIC

SYNCHRONISATION (SYNC)

WHAT IS IT?

Sync is the promotion and licensing of music for use in TV, film, video games and adverts.

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

Wide knowledge of music; love of TV/film/advertising/gaming and what music works with those formats; good listening skills; good people skills; some experience of licence agreements; excellent presentation skills; passion for the music you’re selling; teamwork; ambition.

TYPES OF JOBS

Music Supervisor/Sync Manager; Sync Assistant; Creative managers; Administrator

“DO YOUR RESEARCH INTO WHAT AREAS OF SYNC AND MUSIC LICENSING YOU’RE INTERESTED IN. MAKE NOTES ON SPECIFIC MUSIC USED IN ADVERTS, TV, FILM, TRAILERS ETC, WHICH PARTICULARLY HAD AN EFFECT ON YOU AND FIND OUT WHO WAS BEHIND IT. CONTACT THOSE PEOPLE AND MEET ANYONE RELATED TO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO FOR A COFFEE AND ASK FOR ADVICE. IN THIS AREA OF THE INDUSTRY, DEMONSTRATING PASSION AND DOING YOUR RESEARCH DEFINITELY GOES A LONG WAY!”

RICHARD KING, FABER

COPYRIGHT & ROYALTIES

WHAT IS IT?

Copyright means 'the right to copy'. In music publishing copyright is focussed on the legal rights granted to composers and songwriters for protection of their work. Working in copyright and royalties includes: management, administration and protection of intellectual property rights owned by a composer; registering new music works and catalogues with the collecting societies (for example PRS and MCPS); tracking all uses of works and collecting royalties and fees; distributing royalty fees to composers and songwriters.

TYPES OF JOBS

Copyright Manager; Copyright Assistant; Royalty Tracker; Royalty Accountant

"LEARN AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ABOUT THE ROLE AND THE COMPANY, AND FOLLOW INDUSTRY NEWS." SIMON ANDERSON, AUDIO NETWORK

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

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BUSINESS AFFAIRS

WHAT IS IT?

Business Affairs is the legal and contractual side of music publishing. It mostly involves handling publishing agreements with composers/songwriters, licence negotiations and infringement claims.

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

Knowledge of copyright and contract law; excellent literacy and written communication skills (for contract drafting); attention to detail; legal qualifications; secretarial qualifications.

TYPES OF JOBS

In-house lawyer; Business Affairs Manager; Licensing Manager; Licensing Assistant; Paralegal; Contract Administrator; Litigation Manager

"SHOW A COMMITMENT TO A CAREER IN MUSIC. DO WORK PLACEMENTS WITH MUSIC LAW FIRMS." JACKIE ALWAY, UNIVERSAL MUSIC PUBLISHING

PRODUCTION & EDITORIAL

WHAT IS IT?

Print publishers specialise in creating and producing sheet music and books, and there are a variety of management, production and editorial roles involved. Print publishers consider manuscript scores received; liaise with typesetters/designers; commission and publish new music; proofread and edit music and text.

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

Literacy skills; good communication skills; attention to detail; a love of music including classical music; good organisational skills; understanding of music notation; a high level of music training (editor); sales and marketing skills; IT skills; creative personality; ambition; enthusiasm.

TYPES OF JOBS

Editor; Production Manager; Marketing Manager; Designer; Engraver; Distributor; Typesetter; Digital (online exploitation of printed music)

“DO YOUR RESEARCH AS TO THE PRINT CATALOGUE OF THE COMPANY. TRY TO GET SOME RELEVANT EXPERIENCE/SKILLS. FOR EDITORIAL POSITIONS, CHECK THERE ARE NO MISTAKES OR TYPOS IN YOUR APPLICATION!”

RICHARD KING & LESLEY RUTHERFORD, FABER

HIRE LIBRARIES

WHAT IS IT?

Manufacture and rental of materials to orchestras, ensembles, choruses, opera and ballet companies and international organisations

TYPES OF JOBS

Hire Library Manager/Assistant; Manufacturing Assistant

WHAT MUSIC PUBLISHERS LOOK FOR

Good knowledge of music and instruments; ideally some ability to read a score; good communication skills as well as patience and courtesy when dealing with customers; IT literacy; attention to detail.

“THIS IS A CUSTOMER SERVICE FUNCTION AND AN EXCELLENT ENTRY POINT TO A FURTHER CAREER IN MUSIC PUBLISHING AS IT REQUIRES YOU TO LEARN SKILLS BEYOND THOSE REQUIRED TO SERVICE HIRE ORDERS.”

RICHARD KING, FABER

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