

JOB DESCRIPTION

Role/Title: Costume Performance Technician Apprentice

Reports to: Apprenticeships Manager

Line managed by (Daily Basis): Senior Costume Performance Manager

What does a Costume Performance Technician do?

Theatre costume performance technicians, commonly referred to in the industry as 'wardrobe staff', are responsible for the care, maintenance and usage of costumes. Costume performance technicians are fantastic communicators, delivering the highest standard of artist care, they are responsible leading a team of dressers, as well as for the dressing of performers throughout rehearsals and performances.

What does a Theatre Costume Performance department do?

A theatre costume performance department (often known as the running wardrobe department) is responsible for ensuring that all costume elements are at the standard of the designer's specification for every performance. The department creates costume plots during rehearsals for a production then prepare and set costumes for every rehearsal and performance costumes are required for; including laundering, ironing, steaming, organising dry cleaning, repairing and are responsible for the smooth running of dressing during performances/rehearsals. After the final performance of a show, the department assists cataloguing the costumes and packs them ready for transportation to storage.

Purpose of the Apprenticeship

The Costume Performance Technician Apprenticeship is an opportunity to acquire practical skills as a costume performance technician, relevant to a career in costume performance or running wardrobe in the performing arts industries.

This Apprenticeship is a non-degree level, vocational training route. The role is a full-time position, and you cannot enroll in another course or get another job for the duration of the apprenticeship.

The Royal Ballet and Opera Apprenticeship scheme aims to create opportunities for, and support those who may not have had access to the arts and/or as an alternative route to a career in theatre for those who would face significant barriers to, have not embarked upon, or completed a degree course at university.

Applications are encouraged from candidates who are underrepresented in the Performing Arts and at the Royal Ballet and Opera including those from black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds, low socio-economic backgrounds and disabled people.

This apprenticeship is NOT suitable for those who wish to pursue a career in Costume Making or Costume or Fashion Design. The Royal Ballet and Opera do not offer design-based apprenticeships.

What is involved?

The apprenticeship will be delivered by the costume performance department at the Royal Ballet and Opera, Covent Garden and online college elements by Creative Alliance where you will work towards a

Level 3 Costume Technician – Stage and Screen Apprenticeship Standard.

(<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/apprenticeship-standards/st0783-v1-1>)

- The apprentice will be supported throughout the apprenticeship by a college tutor, RBO costume staff and by the Apprenticeships Team.
- The apprentice will spend time working on both opera and ballet productions and will be required to work during evenings and weekends on performance and/or laundry calls.
- The working week is 42.5 hours.
- There will be the opportunity to spend some work experience time at another theatre venue, production or screen wardrobe setting during the second year of the apprenticeship.

Who will you be working with?

- Performers
- Staff and managers of the costume performance department
- Costume Production Managers and Logistics teams
- Designers

What will you do during the Apprenticeship?

- Assist with the preparation of costumes for productions including laundering, ironing and repairing.
- Undertake setting and dressing plots for specified performers during performances and/or rehearsals.
- Contribute to the maintenance of the costume database and asset management systems, keeping costume notes and related information up to date including dressing plots and clear laundering notes.
- Develop strong working relationships with colleagues across Technical, Production and Costume department as a whole and in particular with performing artists.
- Have a positive and responsible attitude to health and safety.
- Maintain safe and tidy work areas, in the costume performance department and in performance areas.
- Gain familiarity with new and improved making/repairing techniques, materials or working practices.
- Participate in additional training as necessary.
- Carry out any other reasonable duties as requested by the relevant HOD or Apprenticeships Manager.
- Submit learning logs and diaries to the Apprenticeships Manager.
- Attend regular meetings with line managers and the Apprenticeships Manager to review progress.

Minimum essential requirements

- You must be **18 years old or over** on the 1st September 2025.

- You **must not** have completed a degree or equivalent level qualification in the UK or elsewhere (regardless of subject).
- You **must** have work authorisation for the UK.

What are we looking for in a Costume Performance Technician Apprentice?

- An interest in running wardrobe / costume performance in theatre.
- A basic understanding of fabrics, fibres and the various laundering/ironing methods associated with them.
- Basic sewing skills for routine alterations and repairs.
- Excellent interpersonal / communication skills.
- Good attention to detail.
- A helpful, positive and proactive approach.
- Good at working in a team.
- Punctual and good at managing your own workload.
- Self-motivated to acquire new skills and knowledge.
- Physically capable of undertaking the requirements of the job. Reasonable adjustments will be considered as part of your application.

Note: This Job Description reflects the current situation. It does not preclude change or development that might be required in the future.

