

Script Supervisor

Please note that the job description for Script Supervisor differ a bit from the international customs. E.g. the Daily Progress Report in Germany (called "Tagesbericht") resembles more the international AD Report, as ADs in Germany do not write reports and it is not a staple to hand in a lined script at the end of a shooting day.

The following job descriptions specifically describe the job customs in Germany.

The profession of "Script Supervisor" encompasses a complex field during film and television production and involves the documentation and monitoring of technical and artistic aspects during shooting. Advanced Script Supervisors are distinguished by an advisory role due to greater experience, comprehensive and in-depth expertise, along with understanding of all aspects of filmmaking.

It encompasses a complex domain during film and television production and involves the documentation and monitoring of all technical and artistic aspects of shooting.

In addition to reporting for production and post-production, dialogue and text monitoring, as well as comparison of script and shoot continuity, Script Supervisors are also liaisons for all departments regarding continuities:

- Continuity of movement
- Scene-specific continuity (makeup, costume, props, weather, etc.)
- Overall continuity (makeup, costume, props, weather, etc.)
- Continuity relevant to the camera and editing (axis, shot sizes, transitions, etc.)
- Particularly, continuity related to the content (character development, performance, dramaturgy, plot, timeline, etc.)

Script Supervisors are close collaborators of the director and maintain a comprehensive overview at all times. They serve as the central point of contact on the set, capable of answering questions from all departments, contextualizing all aspects in terms of content and dramaturgy.

They immerse themselves early and in detail into the script, paying attention before and during shooting to inconsistencies in plot, text, performance, logic, character development, dramaturgy, etc., and then pointing out these concerns when and where necessary in a professionally sensitive manner.

Script Supervisors anticipate and take note of potential continuity and questions. Furthermore, they can offer suggestions and provide solutions.

Script Supervisors possess sound knowledge of editing and visual composition. They can realistically assess the importance of continuity and provide substantive notes concerning editing, film logic, and visual impact. Also, they can point out errors or omissions in the coverage.

Script Supervisors ensure an optimal flow of information to post-production and provide advice to the director/camera in the best interest of the project.

Professional Requirements:

- Quick comprehension
- Team player
- Empathy, sensitivity, and tact in dealing with people, their needs, and situations
- The ability to remain calm and maintain an overview in all situations
- Assertiveness, determination and decisiveness
- Resilience, multitasking ability
- Ability to concentrate
- Self-organizational skills (methodical work)
- Ability to recognize correlations
- Logical and forward-thinking
- (Refined) language skills sufficient to monitor spoken dialogue and also clearly communicate one's own opinion, as and when appropriate
- Visual imagination and spatial understanding
- Comprehensive film technical knowledge (camera, sound, editing, VFX, etc.)
- Flexibility and openness in all areas of filmmaking
- Comprehension of film dramaturgy
- Understanding of acting processes

Tasks During Preparation:

- Early and detailed immersion in the script, focusing on inconsistencies in plot, text, performance, character development, dramaturgy, timeline, etc.
- Should discrepancies be found, Script Supervisors not only point them out but can offer effective solutions in an appropriate manner
- In the AD system: Set story days, story times, date/week division, and communication to the departments (requires more preparation time and participation in director meetings)
- In the German Regieassistenz-system: if requested by the assistant director, set story days, story times, date/week division (also requires more preparation time and participation in director meetings)
- In the AD System: creating the estimate timing and estimates for scene revisions
- If explicitly requested in the German Regieassistenz-System: if feasible and paid separately – creating the estimate timing and estimates for scene revisions
- Optionally: creating lists for comparing estimate, actual and editing times (projection)
- Participation in rehearsals, table reads, including documenting scenic and dialogue changes (rehearsal days must be paid separately and are not included in preparation time)
- Creating personal records to have continuity (props, makeup, costume) available at any time during the shoot
- In the AD system: creating a script breakdown in consultation with the director and 1st AD (requires more preparation time and participation in director meetings) and communication to the departments
- Setting up the script for individual needs on set (markings, cross-references, continuity notes, estimate times, story days & times, partial shots, etc.)
- Contacting the editing room and post-production regarding reporting and workflow
- Checking expected wild tracks according to the script with the director/assistant director/sound
- Estimating the need for qualified additions, e.g., at splinter or 2nd unit days, or scenes with more than two cameras
- Participation in major production meetings (requires separate payment and is not included in preparation time)

Activities during the shoot:

- Attendance at acting rehearsals and debriefings, including necessary documentation and information sharing with the team
- Feeding of lines
- Monitoring lines (context, fidelity to the work, comprehensibility)
- Optionally: feeding off lines (e.g., phone) for actors without present partners (continuity work and documentation takes priority)
- Focus on inconsistencies in plot, logical continuity, lines, performance, character development, dramaturgy, timeline, etc.
- Independent indication of discrepancies and provision of solution suggestions
- Consulting for spontaneous script changes or cuts, weather issues, etc.
- Point of contact for the director and cast regarding substantive, emotional, and physical continuity
- Examination of shots and potential advice to the director and DOP for optimization, combinability, completeness, i.e. coverage
- Reminding the director and DOP about title and end credit sequences
- Anticipating, checking and documenting scene-specific makeup, costume, props and movement continuity
- Anticipation and verification of overall makeup, costume, props, and movement continuity and corresponding advice
- Ensuring the reproducibility of all shot scenes for continuity, including the actual spoken lines
- Tidy organization of their personal records (if necessary upon assumption by other/additional Script Supervisors)
- Discretionary: Lining of work script to check coverage
- Review of camera axis and noting axis jumps (including assessment of relevance)
- Liaison for camera and lighting (light continuity, day/night mood, scene times, light settings, etc.)
- Determining slate labeling (in consultation with the director & post production beforehand)
- Documentation of specific camera technical data as agreed and noting technical inconsistencies if any (e.g., different color temperature)
- Support for matching shot sizes, transitions, tempi, etc.
- Assistance to the camera department (timing of focus & camera movements, image quality, etc.)
- By arrangement: noting camera data for VFX shots in the absence of a VFX supervisor
- Monitoring the recording of planned wild tracks
- Taking actual timings of scene lengths and providing current projections to the director
- Overview of the status of shots (complete, partial, owed, shoot day, card/roll number)
- Liaison between the set and the editing room/post-production
- If qualified support is available for a splinter or 2nd unit: Passing on the necessary continuity information and report paperwork
- Reporting:
 - Creation of comprehensive reports for the editing room/post-production in handwritten or digital form, including the following details:
 - Director preferences
 - Wild tracks & necessary technical details (shooting day, slate number, etc.)
 - Possible changes in scene sequence
 - Additional comments
 - Actual timing for each scene
 - Status of shots (complete, partial, owed)
 - Unscripted, additional shots (impressions, impromptu shots, establishing shots)

- Recording of VFX-relevant camera data (only if no VFX Supervisor is on site; means additional work)
- Possibly remarks on music used during shooting
- If requested: creating of a lined script for post-production (additional work)
- Creation and distribution of list regarding owed shots/scenes
- Creating a Daily Progress Report or completion of a daily report (not an online ZDF daily report) with the following details:
 - Total Est/Act timings
 - By scene Est/Act timings
 - Scene overview and status
 - Number of shooting days
 - 1st slate, break times, possible first slate after break, wrap time
 - Location (shooting location, set)
 - Shooting ratio
 - Number of setups per day
 - Material consumption

It is not the responsibility of the Script Supervisor to collect start/end times of the crew.

The following tasks entail more work for Script Supervisors and require corresponding compensation:

- Creation of estimate timing (usually at least one working day per 90 minutes of film length)
> the same rate applies to revised script versions
- Integration of script revisions
- Estimate timing for revised scenes
- Creating a lined script for post-production
- Documentation of VFX data in the absence of a VFX Supervisor to a certain extent

Scenarios requiring necessary qualified additions:

- Shoot days with more than two parallel working cameras
- Shooting days with elaborate scenes involving over 6 actors performing simultaneously (big family meals, celebrations, etc.)
- 2nd units, splinter units, drone shots, etc.
- Shoot days with exceptionally high numbers of shots (e.g. action/stunt sequences)