



# CSU Guide to Good Practice (Actors.)

A Bectu briefing • Sept 2023

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*The information in this guide applies to UK based Celebrity Stylists working with Actors.*

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## 1. Introduction

Please find below a brief explanation of the Stylist's working process, time frames, costs as well as factors to consider when styling Talent. We hope this information will help you, the Commissioning Party, and the Talent to understand more about the Stylists role and what we do.

*For the purposes of this document the parties will be named as follows*

**The Stylist:** the person providing styling services.

**The Talent:** the Actor being styled/dressed by the Stylist.

**The Commissioning Party:** the person or company commissioning the Stylist to style the Talent.

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## 2. The Purpose of a Stylist

A Stylist advises the Talent on their clothing choices, helping to craft the public image of the Talent. We work closely with numerous brands building up relationships between them and our Talent. When promoting we are an integral part of their team, helping garner publicity for both the Talent and the production they are promoting. Good Styling is integral to a successful marketing campaign.

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## 3. Types of Styling Job

**Intro:** As a Stylist, we contribute to a variety of the Talent's projects. Please find below a breakdown of all the projects the Stylist contributes to.

**3.1 Spec/Stock/Out of Character Shoot:** The Stylist works alongside the Photographer and Publicity/Marketing team to source and develop a wide range of outfits that are well suited for a variety of promotional materials and publications.

**3.2 Editorial:** The Stylist collaborates with the Photographer and the magazine's Editors to conceive and execute imagery that works with the magazine's theme. The Stylist sources and develops outfits in keeping with the concept, whilst also featuring advertisers the magazine has asked the Stylist to highlight.

**3.3 Press Junket:** The Stylist sources numerous options appropriate for the press junket dress code and works alongside the Talent to put together outfits that work well onscreen. The Stylist makes sure all options do not strobe or glare on screen or have visible logos. Tailoring may be necessary.

**3.4 TV Appearance:** The Stylist sources numerous options appropriate for broadcast's dress code and works alongside the Talent to put together outfits that work well onscreen. The Stylist must consider the Show's format and target audience when planning outfits, The Stylist makes sure all options do not strobe or glare on screen or have visible logos. Tailoring may be necessary.

**3.5 Photocall:** The Stylist sources numerous options that fit the dress code for the Photocall and works alongside the Talent to decide on the final look. The Stylist must consider the colour of the set/carpet to make sure the talent doesn't blend into the background Tailoring may be necessary.

**3.6 Premiere/Screening/Awards Shows:** The Stylist either sources numerous options from multiple brands or works directly with one brand to source an outfit that fits the event's dress code. The Stylist may also work directly with a brand to create a custom outfit months in advance. Tailoring may be necessary. The Stylist must consider the colour of the set/carpet to make sure the talent doesn't blend into the background. We consult with brands to be sure that other Talent are not wearing similar outfits.

**3.7 Brand Events:** The Stylist works directly with the Brand to source outfit options that fit with the event's theme/season as well as that reflects the Talent's personal taste. Tailoring may be necessary. Types of brand events include fashion shows, launch parties and awards season parties.

**3.8 Commercial Campaign:** The Stylist works directly with the brand to source and fit the latest outfit options that reflect the brand's identity and fit the ad campaigns theme. The Stylist also works with the Photographer and creative team to execute the brief in best possible way.

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## 4. Factors to Consider

**Intro:** Where possible a Stylist will attempt to borrow clothes from brands with whom they have working relationships. There are a variety of factors one must consider when styling Talent. The following will affect the likelihood of a brand giving approval to Talent:

**4.1 Tier of Talent:** How well known the Talent is (or will be) is important to brands. Brands take the size of Talent's social media following, the potential success of the production and their role in the production into consideration when deciding if they will dress Talent or not. For newer Talents it is important for the Stylist to give the brand as much information about the Talent and the production they are in so they can make an informed decision as to whether they will loan clothing or not.

**4.2 Size:** Clothes that are loaned come directly from the runway/catwalk and come in what is called 'Sample Size.' Sample size is usually a size UK 6-8 for women's and IT48/UK38 suit size for men's. There is flexibility depending on the fit and fabric of the outfit, and we may be able to tailor the outfit to work for a size above or below. Dressing Talent outside of these sizes is more difficult as often in those circumstances a brand must pull their clothing from their store. If the clothing ends up damaged from wear or is altered, then the clothing cannot be returned to the shop floor and must be written off. This can be incredibly expensive for a brand due to the high value nature of their products, therefore unless the Talent is able to prove they will garner significant press attention from the outing, most brands are likely to say no. It is possible to use oversized samples when dressing non-sample sized Talent, but there are limitations especially when it comes to waist sizes or if the Talent requests a more form fitting, classic look.

**4.3 Visibility:** Brands loan for the sole purpose of publicity. Therefore, they will prioritise loaning clothes to Stylists and Talent who can guarantee them the best images at their proposed event. For example, a premiere will be preferable to many brands for dressing compared to a junket as photographers are rarely present at junkets. Brands do still loan for junkets, but the Talent must be willing to have their photo taken by their Stylist or Hair/Makeup, and ideally post/tag the image. If there is no opportunity for photography the brand will not loan. For events where photographers are not present such as junkets, we would suggest the Studio or Streamer start to allow photographers access to the talent. If the Stylist cannot give the Brands imagery, they are less likely to loan, this is becoming more and more of a problem. Having a photographer present would fix that. As well as this, fans are incredibly interested in Actors' fashion, if Studios/Streamers were able to give them more fashion specific content they would undoubtedly garner more press for their production.

**4.4 Availability:** Brands lending share their clothes across multiple markets, using them for both magazine photo shoots, events worldwide and for their own inhouse activities. For example, during awards season or festival season it can be incredibly difficult to procure clothes as there are hundreds of attendees trying to be dressed for multiple events going on at the same time, there are only so many outfits to go around. Brands will prioritise the events that they will likely get the best publicity from.

**Conclusion:** In the event no appropriate brand is willing to loan to the Talent, a shopping budget is required to complete the job. Should the Commissioning Party or the Talent not wish to give a shopping budget the Stylist must still be paid for their preparatory outreach work.

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## 5. Services

**Intro:** Work takes place during normal working hours (9am - 6pm GMT, Mon - Fri.) Any work outside of these hours (i.e., due to the Talent being outside the UK or the Talent having no weekday availability) should be classed as overtime and paid as such. Please bear this in mind if adding extra looks when Talent is in the USA promoting, as this will require the Stylist to work on two time zones to acquire the outfits needed.

The timeframe of the below processes is dependent on the number of outfits required and the complexity of the job. We have shown the bare minimum amount of time needed to complete each step successfully, based on a minimum of 1 outfit.

The minimum length of time worked for one look is 9 working days. It is possible to prep up to 4 more outfits in this time, however more fitting and tailoring time will be required, as well as an increase of the rate.

**5.1 Lead Time:** We recommend at least two weeks' warning before a fitting. Most Stylists require a minimum of 5 working days before a fitting to complete the brief and preparatory work. For last minute requests, the Stylist will charge a 20 % per look rate increase for each day subtracted from the five-day lead time minimum. For example, 4 days will incur a 20% per look rate increase, 3 days 40%, 2 days 60% and 1 day 80%. Stylists will not start work until a deal memo and terms and conditions have been agreed to. Adequate time must be given to negotiate these before any work can begin. Adequate warning time also allows us to fit jobs around others already in our calendar.

**5.2 The Brief:** The Stylist will consider what event(s) the Talent is attending and the dress code. The Stylist will also talk to the Talent to find out their likes and dislikes so they can ascertain the right direction to go. The Stylist may propose a moodboard should it be required. Once this is done the Stylist will set a fitting date with the Talent and begin their preparatory work.

**5.3 Preparatory Work - Loans (Min. 4 Days):** Once the Stylist and the Talent have agreed on a brief the Stylist will write to brands to determine if they want to dress the Talent or not. The Stylist will write to tens of brands to determine if they are able to lend. They take the factors in the previous section into account when making their decision. The Stylist will be dealing with brands in different countries across multiple time zones and this takes many days of back and forth to determine what can be sent in time for the fitting.

**5.4 Preparatory Work - Shopping (Min. 1 Day):** Should the stylist not be able to procure clothes via a loan shopping budget must be given. The number of days required is dependent on the number of outfits needed.

**5.5 Deliveries & Prepping Looks (1-2 Days):** Before a fitting can take place deliveries of clothing and accessories must be made to the Stylist's studio. These are carefully unpacked and logged over the course of a day to make sure everything is there. Once all the garments are unpacked and hung the Stylist can carefully edit the rail and put outfits together, this usually takes another day's work. For each outfit a Stylist prepares there will

be a minimum of 3-5 options. We need options in case the look does not work on the Talent or if there is no way of altering it to fit correctly.

**5.6 The Fitting (Min. 2 Hours for the first outfit, 1 hour for each subsequent outfit):**

Once all outfits are prepared the Talent attends a fitting at the Stylist's studio. The Talent will try on multiple options to determine the best outfit for the event(s), pictures will be taken so we can see how the outfit will read on camera. Depending on what is required a tailor may or not be present. For external fittings travel and set up time must also be taken into consideration as work. The chosen outfit(s) will be logged. If no tailoring is required the outfit(s) may be handed over to the Talent, depending if the Stylist is attending to dress on the day or not. Due to the amount of clothing and kit required for fittings, transportation is required for external fittings.

**5.7 Initial Returns (Min. 1 Day):** Any unused clothing from the fitting must be returned by the Stylist ASAP. The Stylist will carefully log each piece on a docket to make sure nothing is missing and then place all items back in the packaging they came in. The packaging must be securely closed and clearly labelled. The Stylist will then arrange for a courier to collect the items or return them by hand.

**5.8 Tailoring (Min. 1 Day):** Tailoring may be required to perfect the fit of an outfit. An external tailor will alter the garment where required. There are limitations as to what can be done, and most alterations must be reversible. Time is also required for the Stylist to collect the tailored garments and to deliver them to the Talent. For complex alterations a refit and re-tailor may be necessary, this will add to the working time. A tailor's fee varies and can be £300 - £400 plus VAT. Based on an 8-hour day.

**5.9 Dressing/Shoot Days (Min. ½ Day, inc. travel):** Should the Talent and the Stylist be in the same location at the time of the event, the Talent may want the Stylist to attend to dress them. Similarly, the Stylist will also attend shoot days for jobs like Editorial or Spec Shoots. The Stylist will hang up the garments, steam/iron them and dress the Talent. The Stylist may also have organised the delivery of any fine jewellery or watches with a security guard. For complex outfits the Stylist may be required at the event to make sure the outfit sits correctly and to help the Talent walk comfortably. The Stylist may send an assistant if they are not available, or the Talent is not in the same country.

**5.10 Outfit(s) Recovery (Min. 1 Day. Dependent on reliability of the Talent):** Whilst clothing is usually required to be returned by the Talent within 24 hours of the event, unreliable Talent can turn this into a lengthy process. The Stylist's work includes contacting/following up the Talent, recouping the outfit, checking it for damage, reversing alterations, dry cleaning and finally returning the outfit to the brand that loaned it. Any late returns on the behalf of the Talent can damage a Stylist's reputation with the Brand.

**5.11 Breakdown of Budget (Min. ½ Day):** At the end of a project all expenses must be accounted for. The Stylist makes a note of all costs involved and cross checks them with expense receipts/invoices. Should expense budget be given, the Stylist provides the Commissioning Party with the breakdown along with all relevant receipts/invoices. Please note that any invoices for expenses on account can take up to 28 days to be issued, therefore invoices for expenses may be sent separately from the Stylist's fees at a later. Regardless of expense budget or not, this process must still be undertaken by the Stylist to know their net profit.

**5.12 Assistants:** The Stylist may require an assistant to complete the job. Assistants' rates start at £175 per day minimum (\$350 p/d min if in the USA.). Based on an 8-hour day. Overtime is charged at 2 times the hourly rate of £22p/h after 8 hours. Cars covered before 7am start and past 8pm finish.

## 6. Expenses

**Intro:** The below breaks down the cost of the various expenses a Stylist incurs. Many are dependent on various factors and will vary from job to job. Please note the Talent and the Commissioning Party accept full responsibility for all clothing, accessories, and styling kit whilst in their care, including making timely returns and covering any loss or damage.

**6.1 Couriers (London Based):** Dependent on the distance from point to point. A bike will be used for smaller packages and a van for anything that won't fit in a top box. A bike from West to East is a minimum of £40.

**6.2 UK Postage (Special Delivery):** Dependent on the size and weight of the package. An average-sized 5kg box is a minimum of £11.25.

**6.3 International Shipping:** Dependent on the size and weight of the package. An average-sized 5kg box to Italy or France is a minimum of £50. There may be import tax charged to the Stylist. Usually when working with samples as they have no commercial value there is no import tax, but if goods are not samples or are shopping then import tax is charged. Import tax is required on goods shipped from outside of the UK with a commercial value over £135. The rate depends on the type of goods and where they came from.

**6.4 Transportation:** Required for external fittings and dressing days. Dependent on type of transportation and distance. Due to the high value of clothing, Stylists will only use reliable forms of transport, and these can often come at a premium cost. Uber/Bolt is not an option.

**6.5 Initial Returns (London Multidrop):** £7.00 min. per drop off. Minimum of 8 drop offs (£56.00)

**6.6 UK Outfit(s) Recovery** Dependent on the distance from point to point. A bike will be used for smaller packages and a van for anything that won't fit in a top box. A bike from West to East is a minimum of £40. A van will be more.

**6.7 International Outfit(s) Recovery:** Dependent on size and weight of package. There is an extra charge for the creation of a proforma invoice (customs document.) If the Talent decides to not return to the UK after promo, the rough cost of getting a suitcase back from LA/NYC to London is a minimum of £250 but can cost upwards of £500 if multiple cases are to be returned.

**6.8 Prop Kit:** a £30 charge applies to every job. Any additional specialist underwear, shapewear or hosiery required for a job is additional to this.

**6.9 Dry Cleaning:** As and when required. Dependent on type and number of garments. Reputable, premium dry cleaners will only be used.

**6.10 Shopping Budget:** Not relevant if acquiring clothes via loan is an option. The shopping budget must be realistic and in line with the project's requirements. The Stylist will suggest a budget that they believe is appropriate and will do their best to adhere to it throughout the project and fittings. However, they can only offer a guide price, and if the final budget exceeds the agreed amount due to requests from the Talent or Commissioning Party. Any overspend will be charged back to the client. The stylist will present at least four options for each item required. This means that if the budget is set at £5,000, the Stylist will need to spend at least £20,000 to have enough options available for the artist to choose from. Clients must provide a shopping float to assist with these costs. Once the fitting is complete, any unused items will be returned and refunded.

**6.11 Excess Luggage:** if travelling for work the Stylist will usually require excess luggage to be covered as we often travel with large amounts of luggage. Price per piece depends on weight and size of the luggage as well as what airline is being used.

**6.12 ATA Carnet:** A customs document required when importing/exporting goods, especially when travelling with tour wardrobe. Costs vary and are dependent on the broker used.



**6.13 Day to Day Running Costs:** A freelance Stylist has multiple day to day costs to keep the business running. Including but not limited to mobile telephone (handset, calls (plus international calls), data and add-ons), internet, office supplies, public liability insurance, contents insurance and utility bills. We also have rails, hangers, garment bags in a selection of sizes, iron/steamers, dressing mirrors and numerous suitcases to transport high-value items.

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## 7. The Breakdown of a Rate

All the above factors contribute to how a rate breaks down. One more thing to consider is if a Stylist has an agent or not, as agents take a percentage of the Stylist's fee.

**A busy Stylist will average about 60 looks a year (5 a month.)**

*IF* the rate is exclusive of expenses the Stylist takes the full rate (minus agency commission if applicable) and expenses are charged separately. This is very uncommon when dealing with the Film & TV Industry. In this case the following must be considered by the Stylist:

- **Agent's commission (if applicable):** 20%<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Please note that where an agency fee is not paid on top of the fee by the Commissioning Party SOME agents charge the Stylist 33.3% commission.

- **National Insurance:** £179.40 per year PLUS 9% on profits between £12,570 and £50,270 PLUS 2% on profits over £50,270.
- **Income Tax (Sole Traders):** 20% tax on earnings between £12,571 and £50,270; 40% tax on earnings between £50,271 and £124,140; 45% on earnings over £125,141.
- **Student Loan Repayment:** If applicable
- **VAT:** if VAT registered the Stylist must charge 20% VAT on their invoices

*IF* the rate is inclusive of expenses the Stylist must cover the cost of expenses and the exact amount, they will take home cannot be determined until all expenses are accounted for. The above factors plus the following affect the final amount the Stylist takes home.

- **Expenses:** A minimum of 30% of each job (not including tailor or assistant.)

A Stylist with an Agent working on many studios/streamers most common rate of \$500 (£386\*\*) inclusive of expenses, per look rate for a full year would take home before tax \$16,800 (£12,993\*\*) per year:

- 60 outfits annually x \$500 = \$30,000 (£24,190\*\*)
- MINUS 20%<sup>2</sup> Agency Commission (\$6,000 (£4,838\*\*)) = \$24,000 (£19,352\*\*)
- MINUS min. 30% expenses (\$7,200 (£5,805\*\*)) = \$16,800 (£13,547\*\*) **NOT inc. Tailors or Assistants**
- *EQUALS* \$16,800 (£13,547\*\*) per year.
- *EQUALS* \$8.08 (£6.51\*\*) per hour based on a 40-hour week.

**That is below minimum wage in both the UK and the USA. A Stylist without an agent would take home \$21,000 (£16,944) / \$10.10 (£8.15), which is still below minimum wage.**

Even if the rate was doubled to \$1000 (\$33,600 (£27,094) per year) or tripled to \$1500 (\$50,800 (£40,641) per year) the rate simply is not enough for a highly skilled professional, with many years of experience living in one of the World's most expensive cities.

<sup>2</sup> Please see note on previous page regarding Agent's commission.

\*\* Conversion is correct as of 15th Sept 2023

## 8. What is a Fair Rate?

A fair rate is one that is exclusive of expenses. A Stylist should not be footing the Studios/Streamers bills. As well as this the rate should be paid in Pounds Sterling (£.)

Please bear in mind that as freelancers we do not receive company health insurance, pension, or paid leave, so this must be reflected in a higher rate. As a Union we want to work towards a new rate model that takes into account both hours/days worked and the number of looks. In the interim **we propose a starting rate of £1250 per look**, rising annually in line with inflation.

- 60 outfits annually x £1250 = £75,000
- *MINUS* 20%\* Agency Commission (£15,000) = £60,000
- *MINUS* £11,432 Income Tax
- *MINUS* £4,113.24 National Insurance
- *EQUALS* £44,454.76 annual take home pay after tax. \*

**The above calculation does not take into account Student Loan repayments, private pension plans, private healthcare/dental or day to day business running costs.**

Regarding expenses and services such as assistants, they can be difficult to predict as they can range due to numerous factors, we would suggest including an overspend budget that is 10% of the suggested expense budget. The Stylist must provide proof of receipts to reclaim their expenses.

- Rate - £1250 per Look
- Overtime - £100 per hour (if additional work is required or if fitting is required out of normal working hours.)
- Courier/Shipping Budget – Additional to fee, based on a percentage of the per look rate, decreasing the more looks required. 1 look = 30% of per look rate, 2 looks = 20%, 3 looks = 15%, 4 looks = 12.5%, 5 looks plus = 10%. E.g. 10 looks would require a budget of 10% of £12,500 fee = £1250.
- Tailor - £300 - £400 + VAT per day<sup>3</sup> (Only to be used if required. TBD before or at the fitting.)
- Assistant - 2 days @ £175 = £350 (for every 5 looks required)
- Kit Charge - £30 per job
- Additional Kit (Underwear / Hosiery) - Women's up to £200 per job / Men's up to £100 per job
- Travel (within London) - up to £200 per job
- Shopping Budget - Needed for non-sample size Talent or Talent who do not have a big enough profile. To be discussed on a case-by-case basis
- Expenses Overspend - 10% of all expenses.

Please note that expenses are exempt from agency fees and commission which would save the commissioning party money compared to an all-in rate.

**Payment Terms: within 30 days of receipt of Invoice. 5 working days for expenses. Long payment terms are not acceptable and impact our cashflow severely.**

### **Cancellations:**

Cancellations with less than 24h notice before fitting will be billed at 100%

Cancellations with less than 48h notice before fitting will be billed at 75%

Cancellations with less than 72h notice before fitting will be billed at 50%

**\*Conversion correct as of 15<sup>th</sup> Sept 2023**

<sup>3</sup> Based on an 8-hour day. This is usually enough time to fully tailor a Men's Suit or a complex dress. The final cost depends on the complexity of the job, this will be discussed at the fitting. It could be more, or it could be less.

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## 9. Conclusion

A Stylist works tirelessly to craft the image of their Talent and contributes significant value to the overall project, generating a substantial amount of press for the production through their work.

We must be compensated fairly for the hours we put in. Splitting a budget equally between Styling, Hair & Makeup is not a fair split. Stylists work significantly more time and incur far more expenses compared to someone in Hair/Makeup; who often walk away with the same amount as a Stylist; whilst only working a handful of hours compared to the many days a Stylist must work.

The high cost of expenses should *NOT* be the Stylist's responsibility, they eat into the Stylist's take home pay and more often than not mean that the Stylist is in the red.

Our job is highly skilled and should be highly valued. Pay us fairly and respect the work that we do.

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**We would like to invite the studios/streamers/etc to talk and collaborate on ways to work together more effectively and fairly moving forward.**

**THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO READ THE ABOVE.**