

AUT

# A FUTURE IN RADIO & AUDIO MEDIA





## WHAT COULD A CAREER IN RADIO & AUDIO MEDIA LOOK LIKE?

Radio and audio media is an information leader, a critical curator of music and a friend to millions in their homes, cars and workplaces. It offers everything – music, news, information, entertainment – even images these days thanks to internet streaming! It is fast-paced, on the cutting edge and always evolving.

Radio is staying current in a hugely changing media environment by embracing the internet and a proliferation of digital formats through platforms such as internet streaming, websites, podcasts, iHeart Radio and TuneIn. People download podcasts of programmes to listen at their leisure, while others tune in through mobile phones or smart watches while on trains and buses, at the gym, walking or running. This multi-tasking is another advantage of radio and audio media.

High energy personalities are the public voice of radio, taking on a persona to suit the radio station's audience, whether serious and informative (Katherine Ryan, Radio NZ) or interactive and funny (Stephanie Monks, The Edge). But many other people work in other essential roles to get shows on air, including producers, journalists and sound engineers.

Do you love music and popular culture, or history and politics? Are you excited at the idea of generating content throughout the day to suit a particular audience? Are you interested in passing on news by utilising multi-platforms (web, radio and video)? Do you love to tell stories or make people laugh? Then radio and audio media could offer any number of great career opportunities for you.



## OUTLOOK AND TRENDS

### Multi-platforms

Radio works smoothly on multiple platforms and that is where change and growth is most evident, such as radio with online/video streaming and NZME's convergence of print, radio, digital and events. Graduates who understand video, social media and writing, as well as radio, are in demand.

### Variety of genres

The diversity of radio stations and programmes offers varied opportunities. Radio NZ's Morning Report is an influential news channel that sets the daily news agenda – most news media follow up stories that initially run on Morning Report.

Some stations focus on youth and are cheeky and very interactive. Other stations focus strongly on music, or sport. Community radio stations cover localised needs, while talkback radio stations debate popular and controversial topics.

### Reliability

Radio is second to social media when it comes to speed of delivery of news, but top of the list when it comes to the integrity of the information. Radio stations need to employ staff with strong research and news gathering experience to keep that advantage.

## WORK SETTINGS

Radio is available 24/7 so shift work is a requirement for anyone involved in the production and presentation of radio programmes. This can mean 5am starts or the midnight to dawn shift.

Graduates usually work in one of four divisions within a radio organisation. The following roles will overlap at smaller radio stations, eg a presenter helping sell advertising for time slots.

**Public voice:** presenters are in radio studios communicating with audiences (music, talkback, current affairs) and radio journalists report the news from the field or within the studio. Initially unseen voices, these roles are becoming more visible with the increase of online and video streaming.

**Technical:** producers and sound engineers work on the technical production and delivery of broadcasts, keeping control over the sound as the show goes live and ensuring there is no 'dead' space (silence) on air.

**Backroom:** researchers and copywriters work on scripts and content with the news broadcasters (who may also be involved in writing their scripts), researching and/or sourcing interviews for future shows, or writing advertisements and promos. In smaller stations/networks, presenters will do much of the research and interview sourcing themselves.

**Sales/marketing:** organise advertising and sponsorship, sell time slots, visit clients and set up events to promote the radio station in the public arena.

**Other options:** as well as nationwide commercial radio agency Radio Bureau, there are other marketing organisations that design radio campaigns for big brands, such as Sony and Ford that need people for sales and copywriting.

While studying, students sometimes land part-time or voluntary roles in radio stations like ZM and The Edge doing promotional work and occasional on-air shifts.

## CAREER ROLE EXAMPLES

Attitude determines destiny when starting out, so graduates must be prepared to do anything and everything to gain practical knowledge and experience.

Radio stations need people who can think creatively, are flexible, engaged in their culture and community, and excited about the potential of the digital age.

Radio roles include:

**Radio presenter** – introduces music and/or presents or hosts programmes on the radio. Involves preparing scripts and working with producers to develop programme material, keeping the target audience in mind. Disc jockeys or DJs create their music schedule, comment about the music between sets and take requests from listeners.





**Radio journalist** – keeps up to date with current affairs, attends press conferences, follows up potential stories. Writes succinct news items, but also capable of delivering breaking news live without a script. Confident on air, digitally and technically savvy.

**Online editor** – works alongside the on-air and product teams to create content. Liaises with marketing to deliver advertising and sponsorship initiatives. Needs expertise in Photoshop, taking photos, editing video, utilising social media etc.

**Radio programmer** – designs and schedules the programmes and/or music broadcast by radio stations. Shapes the news and entertainment content, including the tone and style, in accordance with the time of day and audience reach. Covers pre-recorded programmes and live broadcasts.

**Radio account manager** – responsible for generating income through advertising sales and sponsorship to clients and potential clients. Establishes and builds business relationships with clients, creates briefs, provides information, presents campaign proposals and creates reports on revenue.

Sources: Career NZ, prospects.ac.uk, NZME, Mediaworks

## SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE

- Strong skills in scripting and telling stories
- Ability to pick trends and reflect popular culture
- Ability to recognise a worthwhile story and tell it well on radio
- Very focused and capable of following through on a creation from start to finish
- Very self-motivated and always able to present professionally and with enthusiasm, no matter what is happening
- Capable of delivering content energetically across multiple platforms day after day
- Always aware of audience make-up and responding accordingly
- Technically savvy

## PERSONAL QUALITIES

- Engaged and interested in the world and curious about how it works
- Information hungry
- Excited about popular culture, and interested in history and politics
- Hardworking and able to work independently
- Understands importance of being part of a team and following strategies

## SALARY GUIDE

|   | Salary (per year)   |
|---|---|
| Radio presenter<br>NB: well known, popular radio personalities can earn over six figures. | 1 to 3 years<br>\$30,000-\$70,000 depending on employer and experience (\$47,000 average) |
| Radio journalist  | \$35,000-\$75,000+ depending on organisation and experience                               |
| Account manager   | \$58,000-\$86,000 depending on employer and experience                                    |
| Programming and production roles  | \$53,000-\$65,000 depending on employer and experience                                    |
| Media buyer   | \$59,000-\$71,000 depending on employer and experience                                    |

Sources: payscale.com, SEEK, Careers NZ

Salary range is indicative of the New Zealand job market at the time of publication and should only be used as a guideline.

## THE AUT APPROACH

AUT has the only New Zealand university-based radio and audio media degree. Graduates are multi-skilled; confident and capable technically with radio, but can also use a camera and create and edit audio and video. They are taught sound journalism practices such as critical thinking and multi-platform writing.

Radio and audio media students are also exposed to courses such as media politics and business in society.

They are taught in world class broadcast studios and run their own student radio station where they use sophisticated radio equipment. They graduate confident with both the recording and business side of the radio and audio media world.

## FURTHER STUDY OPTIONS

Postgraduate options in communication , radio and audio media start with a postgraduate certificate in communication. There is a Postgraduate Diploma in Communication Studies with a radio specialisation, a Master of Communication Studies and PhD programmes. Research areas include journalism, radio and the internet, deregulation and audiences, radio and music, media and politics, deregulation of the media, media convergence.



## STEPHANIE MONKS

Radio Announcer and TV Presenter, The Edge

Bachelor of Communication Studies in Radio\*

"While studying at AUT, I worked part-time at The Edge as a promotional assistant – basically a fancy name for 'giver of free stuff' or 'sausage sizzle master'. Over the three years I worked my way up to weekend announcer and fill-in weekday announcer.

On the day I handed in my final assignment I was offered a job as workday announcer for More FM Waikato. After 8 months, The Edge Night Show co-host job came up, and I was back in Auckland working in my dream job.

This involves TV presenting on air 4pm–5.30pm and then I'm on radio 7pm to 10pm. Every day is different which makes it so enjoyable. Some days I'm interviewing huge stars like Justin Bieber or Demi Lovato; other days I'm bungy jumping off the Harbour Bridge dressed as Katy Perry and singing 'Firework'.

Confidence is a key skill in my role, as well as creativity, high energy and enthusiasm. And it's important to simply be yourself.

I really enjoy being super creative whether it's a piece for radio, a bit for TV, or a social media post. And of course, the people! I love connecting with our audience. I love everyone I work with.

A challenge to new broadcasters would be the lack of radio announcer jobs in New Zealand, so I strongly suggest gaining work experience while you study to get an early foot in the door.

Social media is a big part of the future of radio. People are using social media 24/7 and so is The Edge. While broadcasting on the radio to our audience we are also on Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat and Facebook."

## EMPLOYER COMMENT

"Presenting isn't all glitz and glamour, it requires lots of preparation and planning off air not to mention the work hours usually don't fit into a normal 9–5 workday. Key skills include excellent written and spoken communication skills, ability to take direction, presentation skills across all mediums, strong understanding of social media, passion for music and pop culture, willingness to always improve (like sports people, great media personalities are always trying to improve their performance).

Steph has all the functional skills but the x-factor is her personality and lifestyle which complements The Edge brand. She lives and breathes our audiences' lifestyle making her relatable to the audience. When you combine that with the natural chemistry between Steph and her co-host you get a better performance from both of them."

**Ryan Rathbone**

National Content Director,  
The Edge, Mediawork



## USEFUL WEBSITES

### **The Radio Bureau**

[www.trb.co.nz](http://www.trb.co.nz)

### **NZME (radio, digital, print)**

[www.nzme.co.nz](http://www.nzme.co.nz)

### **Fairfax Media**

[www.fairfaxmedia.co.nz](http://www.fairfaxmedia.co.nz)

### **Public Radio Forum**

[www.transom.org](http://www.transom.org)

### **NZ on Air media audience research**

[www.nzonair.govt.nz/research](http://www.nzonair.govt.nz/research)

### **The Big Idea (job site for creative industries)**

[www.thebigidea.nz/work](http://www.thebigidea.nz/work)

### **Radio, Television, Digital Association (US)**

[www.rtdna.org](http://www.rtdna.org)


## FURTHER INFORMATION

For the most up-to-date information on studying radio and audio media, and the Bachelor of Communication Studies, visit [www.aut.ac.nz/radio-study](http://www.aut.ac.nz/radio-study)

### **FUTURE STUDENTS**

Contact the Future Student Advisory team for more information: [www.aut.ac.nz/enquire](http://www.aut.ac.nz/enquire)

[futurestudents@aut.ac.nz](mailto:futurestudents@aut.ac.nz)

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### **CURRENT AUT STUDENTS**

Contact the Student Hub Advisors team for more information: 0800 AUT UNI (0800 288 864)

[www.aut.ac.nz/enquire](http://www.aut.ac.nz/enquire)

[studenthub@aut.ac.nz](mailto:studenthub@aut.ac.nz)

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### **EMPLOYABILITY & CAREERS**

For other Future Career Sheets visit:


[www.aut.ac.nz/careersheets](http://www.aut.ac.nz/careersheets)


For employability and career support, AUT students can book an appointment through <https://elab.aut.ac.nz/>

### **CITY CAMPUS**


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The information contained in this career sheet is correct at time of printing, September 2020.

