Finance

Finance could be the ideal career path for you if you have strong communication and numeracy skills, a methodical approach to work, and an interest in business.

There are many different routes into the industry, from school leaver programmes and Modern Apprenticeships to graduate and postgraduate training programmes.

The latest figures report that almost 2.5 million people in the UK worked in financial and related professional services in 2023. Of those, 1.1 million was in financial services (banking, insurance, fund management and other financial services), while related professional services (management consultancy, accountancy and legal services) had 1.4 million. [1]

What areas can I work in?

The finance industry is divided into two main sub sectors: accountancy, and financial services.

The financial services industry is divided into five main sub sectors: banking, asset management, general insurance, life and pensions, and intermediation.

The industry includes a wide range of different careers and areas of work including: sales, customer service, IT, financial advice, management, administration and business support.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our Career Pathway.

What kind of companies can I work for?

Financial services workers operate in many different industries and organisations, from local government to chemical engineering plants.

Types of companies directly relating to the finance industry include:

- banks and building societies
- investment banks
- stockbrokers
- accountants
- insurance.

What's the job market like?

As the largest UK financial centre outside London, the financial and related professional services sector is a key part of both the Scottish and UK economies.

Glasgow and Edinburgh are the two most important financial centres. Edinburgh, East and Midlothian has large banking, pensions and investment management sectors. Glasgow region has particular strengths in insurance and

accountancy. [2]

According to an industry report by Skills Development Scotland, in 2025 the number of people working in the financial services sector was 71,300 accounting for 2.6% of Scottish employment. It was estimated to have increased by 0.9% (or 700 people) between 2015 and 2025. [2]

The greatest number of people employed in financial services in Scotland in 2025 were in: Edinburgh, East and Midlothian (33,700); Glasgow College Region (19,800); West Region (4,300); and Lanarkshire (2,900). [2]

SDS also reports that several of the large financial services employers have been increasing their footprint in the Scottish financial services sector, including the modern Barclay's campus in Glasgow, and the BlackRock expansion in Edinburgh, the latter growing its Edinburgh base to accommodate 1,400 employees in a range of roles including audit, risk, legal, technology and operations. [2]

Facts and figures

- Financial Services has a higher proportion of the workforce educated to SCQF Levels 7 and above, and a lower proportion educated to SCQF Levels 5 and 6, compared to Scotland overall. [2] See the career pathway at the end of this article to see what qualifications are available at each level.
- Industry revenue for the bookkeeping market is forecast to grow at an annual compound rate of 2.5% to £7.7 billion, and with the number of UK businesses anticipated to grow, this will give bookkeepers a larger client base. [3]
- In the UK, from the academic year 2022/23, 82.9% of finance and accountancy graduates were in full time or part time employment 15 months after graduating. Of those 53.5% found work as business, HR and finance professionals. A further 18.1% were working and studying. [4]
- From that same period, the top three jobs were chartered and certified accountants, finance and investment analysts and advisers, and taxation experts. [4]

Want to find out more?

Depending on the area of finance you want to go into, you can find useful information on education, qualifications and careers on the following websites: ICAS; the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy; and the Chartered Insurance Institute.

The getinto.finance website is also a great source of careers information, including roles available and different pathways to these.

Sources

[1] Key facts about UK-based financial and related professional services 2026, The City UK (www.thecityuk.com) (4 June 2026)

[2] Sectoral Skills Assessment: Financial Services, Skills Development Scotland (October 2025)

[3] Market Report: Bookkeeping, Business Gateway (December 2025)

[4] What do graduates do? Prospects (part of Jisc) and AGCAS (2025/26)