

Science and Mathematics

If you like the idea of developing new food products, testing anti-ageing serums, teaching, setting up businesses or studying the effects of pollution on marine life, then a career in science and mathematics may appeal to you.

You need to be logical, analytical, good at solving problems and accurate in your approach to work.

What areas can I work in?

The science and mathematics career area includes the wide range of careers in maths and the biological, chemical and physical sciences. It also includes materials science and food science and technology.

If you think you may also be interested in other areas of technology you may want to look at the career areas for [Engineering](#), [Computing and ICT](#) and [Health and Medicine \(including Medical Technology\)](#).

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?

Science and mathematics play a part in a wide range of industries, so you could find yourself working for retail companies to local government or research and development firms.

What's the job market like?

Job prospects in this career area still look promising, especially for highly qualified scientists and technicians, as the use of new technologies and products continues to grow.

In 2019, the average salaries for science graduates in full time paid employment in the UK varied across the science subjects. Maths graduates who undertook significant further study earned an average of £26,470 a year, and Physics graduates with an additional qualification (at Masters degree level) earned an average of £27,156 a year.

In the academic year 2017/18, the percentage of science and maths graduates in full time employment after 15 months of graduating was: Biology 44.9%; Chemistry 52.2%; Physical and geographical sciences 56.3%; Physics 50.5%; and Mathematics 60.7%.

Of those, Chemistry graduates were more likely to find work as science professionals (21.7%), while Maths graduates found work primarily in business, HR and finance roles.

While science and mathematics graduates seem to have slightly lower employment rates across the overall subject spectrum, they are much more likely to take up further study or training, compared to other graduates: Biology 20.6%; Chemistry 23.0%; Physical and geographical sciences 13.5%; Physics 24.0%; and Mathematics 12.2%.

In Scotland, the life sciences and biotech sector aims to continue to grow biotechnology related turnover to £8 billion by 2025.

Recently, a £78 million investment for a global research hub in Scotland was announced. More than 500 new jobs are to be created over the next three years as part of plans to establish a global health research, development and manufacturing hub. The posts will be located at sites across Stirling, Inverness and a new facility under construction at Eurocentral, near Glasgow.

A £20 million fund to transform Medicines and Diagnostics Manufacturing was announced, opening up opportunities across the UK, including Scotland.

Facts and figures

- Chemical science industries directly employ around 11,000 people in Scotland, across 250 companies.
- Scottish chemical exports are worth more than £4.4 billion a year.
- There are over 150 pharmaceutical services and supply companies in Scotland, employing over 9,000 people.
- Scotland is a key site for the manufacture of high potency active pharmaceutical ingredients (HPAPI's) with 17% of sites in Europe based in Scotland.
- Renfrewshire will become home to the £65 million National Manufacturing Institute and the £56 million Medicines Manufacturing Innovation Centre, located adjacent to Glasgow Airport.
- Scotland has one of the largest life sciences clusters in Europe, and the industry continues to grow. It employs over 41,000 people in over 770 organisations.
- Scotland's chemical sciences research and development is consistently ranked in the world's top three.

Want to find out more?

- If you are interested in science careers you might want to visit some of the following websites for information and inspiration:
- [The Science Council](#)
- [Talent Scotland](#)

Sources

- Sectors: Chemical and Industrial Biotechnology Sciences, [Scottish Development International](#) (February 2021)
- Sectors: Life Sciences and Biotech, Scottish Development International website (2021)
- '£78 million investment for global research hub in Scotland', [Life Sciences in Scotland](#) (March 2021)
- What do graduates do? Prospects in association with AGCAS (2020/21)