

## Diplomatic Service Operational Officer

Diplomatic Service operational officers work for the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO), protecting and promoting British interests throughout the world. They work in the FCDO headquarters in London and in British embassies, high commissions and consulates abroad.

### The Work

You could be:

- dealing with a range of issues and policies, such as counter terrorism, human rights or climate change
- running an office and organising the work of other staff
- dealing with correspondence and accounts
- preparing documents for meetings and chairing the meetings, sometimes in front of senior officials
- assisting British citizens abroad, issuing visas or arranging VIP visits
- advising British businesses about the trading situation in overseas countries
- informing the media – television, radio and newspapers – about British policies
- amending travel advice for people travelling abroad
- organising and managing ministerial and diplomatic visits.

### Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the department in which you work
- the demand for the job.

Diplomatic Fast Stream recruits would usually earn £28,000 a year. If you are based in London you would receive an additional location allowance of around £3,000. There is a good pension scheme.

With experience and promotion you could earn up to £45,000 a year.

### Conditions

- You would be based in an office and work regular hours.
- You would initially work in the FCDO in London, then be posted overseas. You must be prepared to work anywhere in the world.
- Working hours overseas are not fixed, so you need to be flexible.
- The work may be stressful, especially if there are changes in foreign policy or after a natural disaster or terrorist attack.

### Getting In

- Entry is currently through the Civil Service Fast Stream route – Diplomatic Service or Diplomatic Economic.

See the Civil Service Fast Stream website below for details.

- To get in you should have a 2:1 degree for the economic route and 2:2 degree for the Diplomatic Service route. Entry to a degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) course normally requires 4-5 Highers, plus English at least to National 5.
- To join the Diplomatic Service you must be a British citizen, and have lived in the UK for at least 5 of the previous 10 years. Exceptions to this rule such as having served overseas with HM Forces or worked with UK Government are listed on the FCDO website.
- Entry is competitive and you will have to take tests and attend an interview. In addition, you will have to go through medical and security checks.
- The FCDO offers internship schemes over the summer. Check the website for details.
- It helps to have an aptitude for learning languages. The FCDO is particularly interested in applications from those who can speak an additional language.
- If you have dual nationality (including British), this will not prevent you from applying. However, you should get in touch with the recruitment office at the FCDO for advice on any potential difficulties with the country of your second nationality.
- Experience of living or working abroad can be helpful.

## What Does It Take

You should be:

- interested in international affairs
- able to understand complex information quickly
- tactful and diplomatic
- discreet and able to respect confidentiality
- willing to move, as you will change jobs every few years
- prepared to work in challenging conditions
- good at identifying and solving problems
- adaptable, to cope with different cultures.

You should have:

- good written and spoken English
- good teamwork skills
- the ability to learn new languages
- strong organisational ability
- commercial and financial awareness.

## Training

- The Diplomatic Service Fast Stream scheme runs over 2 years with two 12 month placements (the duration of 2 years is under review and may be 3 years for 2021 starters).
- You would train on the job under the supervision of experienced staff.
- When you start, you would have an induction course on the aims, work and structure of the Diplomatic Service.
- You would continue to attend other courses, and before your first posting abroad, you would have

training in relevant areas, including languages.

## Getting On

- In the Diplomatic Service, there is a well-structured promotion system.
- Promotion is based strictly on experience and performance.
- Work in the Diplomatic Service provides very useful experience which can be put to good use in other jobs both in the public sector and also in private business.

## More Information

The FCDO has a global network of 280 diplomatic offices, with around 17,300 employees.

Get more information on careers in the Civil Service from their [Careers website](#).

## Contacts

### Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office

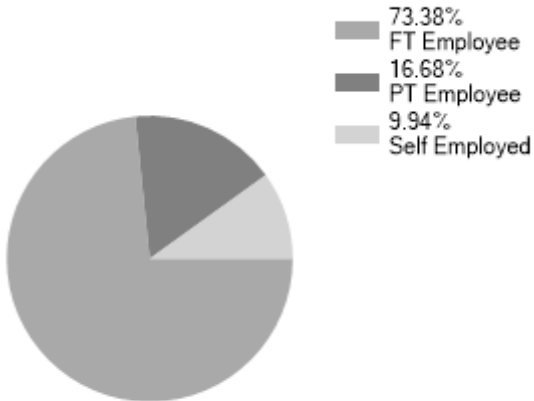
Tel: 020 7008 5000

Email: [fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:fcdo.correspondence@fcdo.gov.uk)

Website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/foreign-commonwealth-development-office)

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

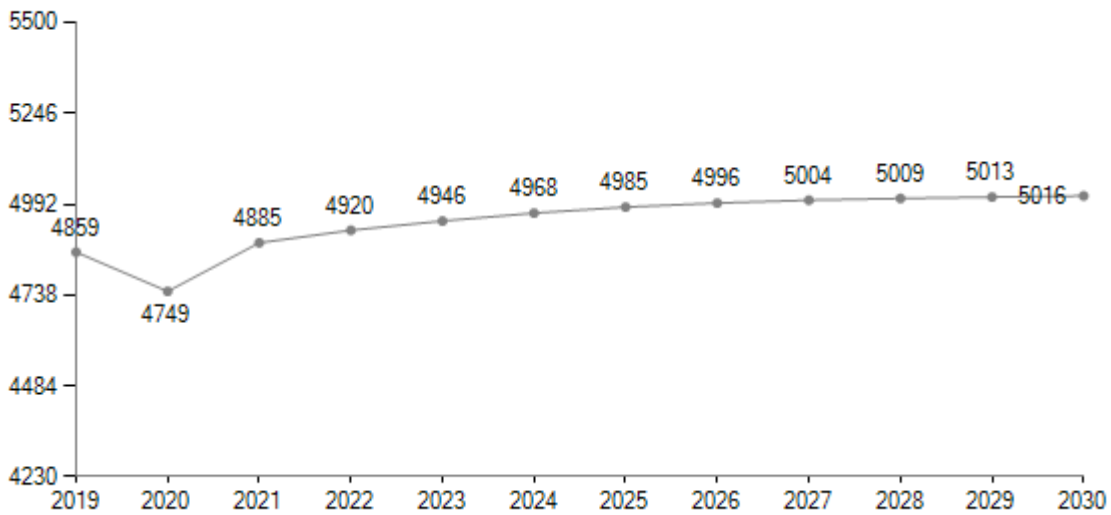


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)