

Textile Designer

Textile designers create designs for fabrics and textiles that are used for clothing and also for home furnishings and paper-based products such as wallpaper. The textiles may be printed, woven or knitted and often have repeating patterns.

The Work

You could be:

- researching fashion trends for the next season – colours, designs and fabrics
- taking into account the cost and quality of yarns, dyes and materials
- trying out different colours, textures and fabrics
- producing designs, usually by computer-aided design (CAD) software but occasionally by hand, to show to clients
- working with technicians, making samples to show design companies or individual clients
- working to requirements laid down by a manufacturer
- keeping up to date with new designs and production methods, such as rotary and flat bed printing
- specialising in one area, such as clothing, furnishing fabrics or hand crafted textiles
- attending trade shows and researching new fabrics and designs.

Pay

Pay rates vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting salaries for qualified textile designers in the UK tend to be in the range of £20,000 to £25,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £30,000 a year. Senior textile designers could earn up to £60,000 a year, depending on the company and location.

Some textile designers work freelance. They charge a fee, which varies depending on the work and their reputation. The better known you are, the more you can charge.

Conditions

- You would be based in an office or studio.
- You will spend a lot of time working on a computer, designing and changing patterns.
- You may also spend some time in factories, with production staff, to oversee the work.
- You may have to travel to meet fashion designers, buyers, production managers or individual clients.
- You might also travel to meetings and trade fairs in the UK or abroad.
- You would normally work regular hours, but you may often have to work evenings and weekends to meet deadlines.

Getting In

- You usually need a degree (SCQF Level 9-10) in textile design, art and design or fashion with a specialism in textiles. It may also be possible to gain entry with an HND (SCQF Level 8) in textiles or fashion textiles.
- Degree courses in Textiles, Fashion and Textiles Design and Design for Textiles are available at the University of Edinburgh, Glasgow School of Art, Heriot-Watt University and Robert Gordon University.
- Glasgow Clyde College offers a joint degree in Textiles - Specialising in Weave and Print with Heriot-Watt University. Years 1 and 2, leading to an HND, are completed at Glasgow Clyde College, before transferring to Heriot-Watt for years 3 and 4 of the degree.
- For entry to an HND you need 1-3 Highers or a relevant NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6), for a degree, normally 4-5 Highers, including English and Art and Design.
- You also need a good portfolio of designs relevant to the course you wish to enter.
- If you are very talented and have an exceptionally good portfolio, you might get into college or university without the necessary Highers.
- You could start by taking an NC or NQ (formal entry requirements are not always needed) or an HNC (2 Highers for entry) in similar subjects. This might get you a job, perhaps as a textile design assistant, or lead on to an HND or degree.

For art school courses you need to apply through UCAS.

Entry to this career can be very competitive. You could find work with textile manufacturers (which are mainly in the Northwest and Midlands of England and the Scottish Borders) or with specialist design studios (mainly in the London area). You may find jobs advertised in the specialist press.

What Does It Take

You need:

- to be artistic, creative and imaginative
- an interest in design and the ability to spot new trends
- skills in specialist software such as Photoshop and Illustrator or CAD software
- to understand production processes like dyeing, printing and weaving
- to be enthusiastic and confident in promoting your work
- a good eye for colour, design, detail and texture
- a good business sense
- good communication skills.

You need to be able to:

- work calmly under pressure to meet deadlines
- work alone and as part of a team
- accept criticism of your work.

Training

- You would train and gain experience on the job with your employer.
- You may attend conferences, seminars and specialised courses to keep up to date with the latest trends and developments.
- You may gain professional membership of the Textile Institute.

Getting On

- In larger organisations, you might be able to gain promotion to senior textile designer.
- You might move on to be a manager, in which case you would do less design work.
- You could move into work as a buyer, or into sales, marketing or production.
- You might work freelance, selling your work to shops or craft fairs.
- You could work in Europe, Asia or the USA, where there may be wider opportunities, to get experience.

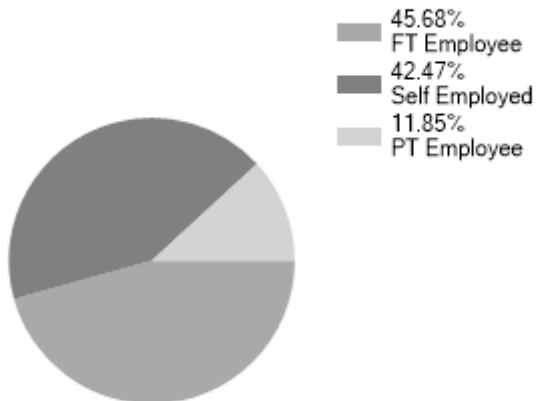
More Information

- Getting work as a freelance textile designer depends on becoming well known and established. This can take some time.
- If you work freelance you must build up a portfolio to show possible clients when seeking work.
- You must work to build up contacts and keep regularly in touch with them.
- For more information on creative careers see [Discover Creative Careers Finder](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

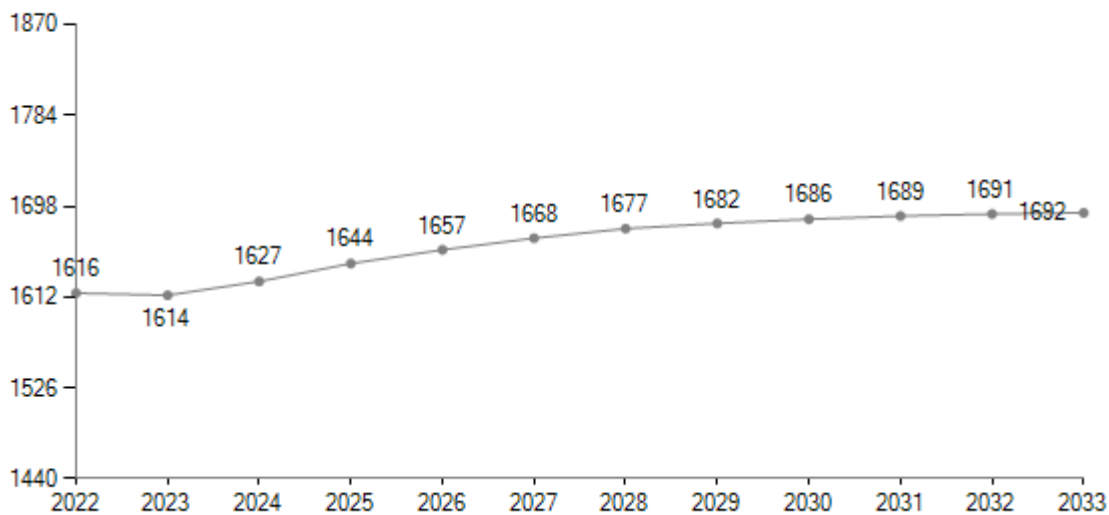


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)