

Graphic Designer

Graphic designers produce designs using images and words to get across ideas and information.

Working to a 'brief' from a client, senior designer or account executive, they create designs for adverts, packaging, menus, books, posters, letterheads, company logos and magazines.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing the brief with a client, deciding how the design should look and how much it should cost
- coming up with ideas and producing a series of computer visuals, or drawing a series of sketches to show the client
- using specialist design software, such as InDesign, Illustrator and Photoshop
- making any changes as requested by the client, such as changing images or text
- keeping to the budget and time scale for the work
- presenting the final design to the client for approval
- proofreading the final artwork and preparing the files for print
- if you work freelance, showing your portfolio to employers to get more work.

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 graphic designers in the UK tend to be in the range of £25,000 to £35,000 a year. Senior graphic designers can earn from £35,000 to £55,000 a year or more.

Some graphic designers work freelance. Depending on the work – the average hourly rate is around £20 to £30. The better known they are, the more they can charge.

Conditions

- You would work in a design studio or office, usually with a team of other designers.
- If you work freelance you would work from home or share a studio space.
- You would liaise with printers, clients, marketing professionals and sometimes photographers.
- You might travel about the country to visit exhibitions, clients and printers.
- You would work regular hours, but would have to work some evenings and weekends to meet deadlines.
- You may be able to work part time.

Getting In

- You usually need an HND (SCQF Level 8) or degree (SCQF Level 9) in graphic design, visual communication or art and design.
- For entry to an HND you usually need 1-2 Highers, for a degree, 4-5 Highers, normally including English and Art and Design.
- You also need a very good portfolio of artwork.
- You could start by taking an NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6) (formal entry requirements not always needed) or an HNC (SCQF Level 7) (1-2 Highers needed for entry) in a graphic design subject. This might get you a job, perhaps as a junior graphic designer if you have a strong portfolio of artwork. However, candidates usually move on to HND or degree level study.
- Good computer skills are essential.

For art school courses you need to apply through UCAS.

You could work with advertising agencies, design studios, publishing companies or broadcasting companies.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- artistic, creative and imaginative, with a good eye for colour and design
- skilled in using graphics software
- ambitious and motivated
- accurate, with excellent attention to detail
- good at listening to other people and explaining your own ideas
- aware of commercial pressures
- confident and outgoing, to sell work to clients.

You need to be able to:

- accept criticism of your work
- keep up to date with new design trends
- organise your own workload
- work to strict deadlines
- understand different printing processes
- work alone and as part of a team.

Training

- Training is through experience, on the job, learning new skills for projects you work on.
- You will need to keep up to date with changes in graphic design trends, software and technology throughout your career.
- The [Chartered Society of Designers](#) offers a programme of continuous professional development.

Getting On

- You may start as junior graphic designer doing routine tasks.
- You could then move on to be a graphic designer, then a senior graphic designer, leading a team.
- You might move into a management job, which would mean doing less design work.
- You might move to a larger company to gain wider experience and perhaps a higher salary.
- You might move into design research, a new but growing field, based on either academic or market needs.
- With experience, you might work freelance, or set up your own company.

More Information

For more information on creative careers see the [Discover Creative Careers Finder](#) website.

Contacts

Creative Scotland

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

Website: www.creativescotland.com

Website (2): opportunities.creativescotland.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland

D&AD

Tel: 020 7840 1111

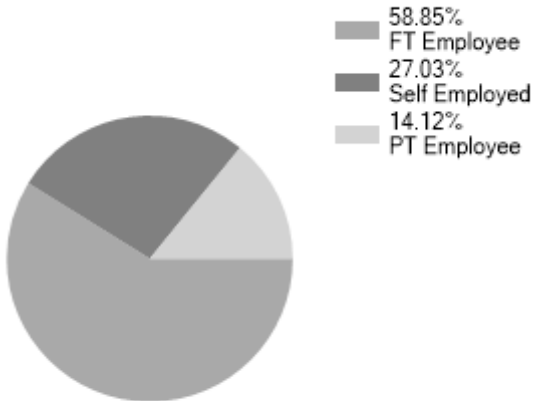
Website: www.dandad.org

X: @dandad

Facebook: www.facebook.com/DandADuk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

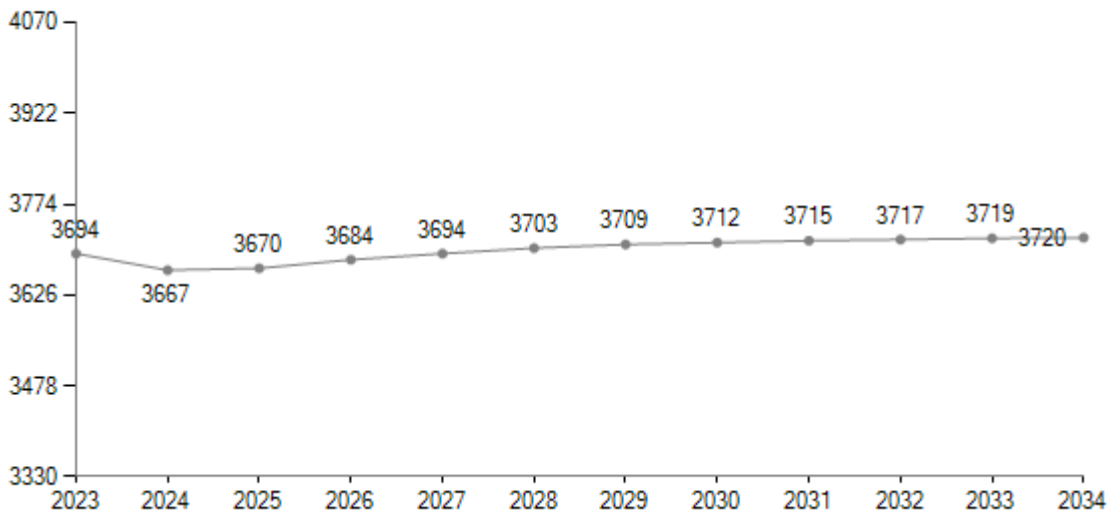


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)