

## 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 an assistant graphic designer, or lead on to an HND or degree.
- 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 software and technology throughout your career.
- The Chartered Society of Designers offers a programme of continuous professional development.

## Getting On

- You may start as an assistant 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

### Chartered Society of Designers (CSD)

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Email: [membership@csd.org.uk](mailto:membership@csd.org.uk)

Website: [www.csd.org.uk](http://www.csd.org.uk)

X: @csdminerva

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/chartereddesigners](https://www.facebook.com/chartereddesigners)

### D&AD

Tel: 020 7840 1111

Website: [www.dandad.org](http://www.dandad.org)

X: @dandad

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/DandADuk](https://www.facebook.com/DandADuk)

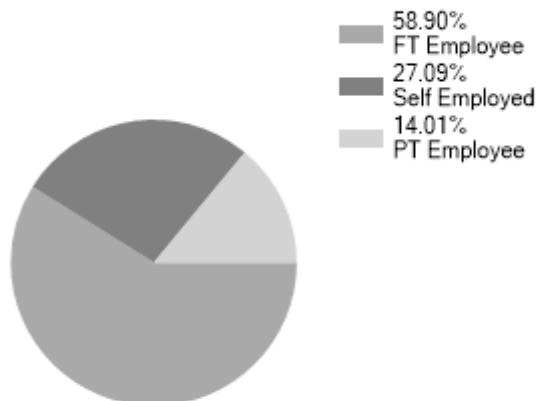
### Discover Creative Careers Finder

Website: [discovercreative.careers/#](https://discovercreative.careers/#)

X: @CreativeCareer5

## Statistics

Employment Status UK %

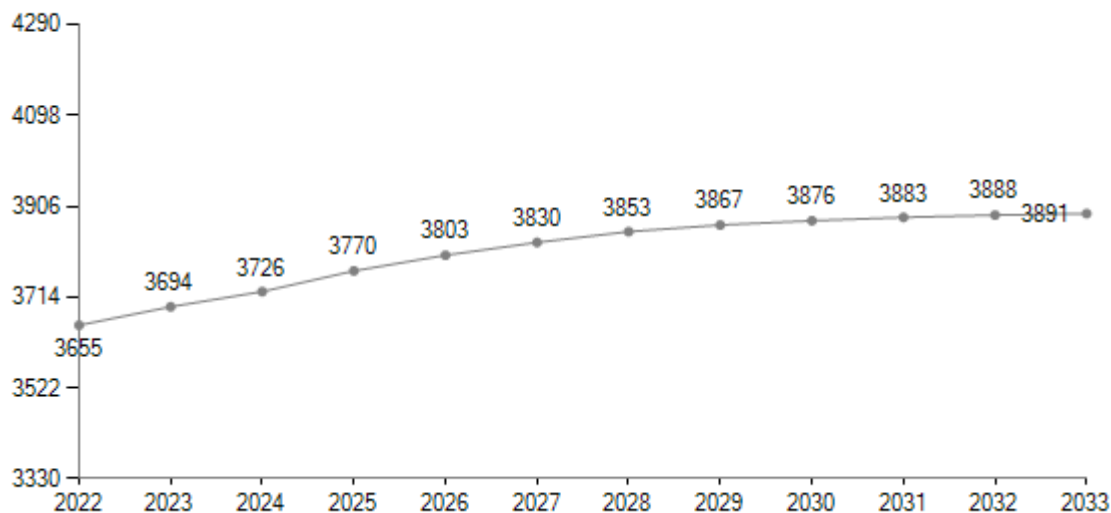


### Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)