

Database Administrator

Database administrators (DBAs) design, manage and update computer databases which store large amounts of information. They are also responsible for the accuracy and security of the database.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing requirements with clients and producing a specification
- producing data models and physical designs of what database structure (including tables and columns) is required
- monitoring the database performance and checking for errors, such as storage space issues or data inaccuracy
- installing, programming and testing new databases and upgrading existing ones
- writing manuals for users and training staff to use the databases
- setting up user accounts and passwords and ensuring the databases are secure and not at risk from hacking and viruses
- creating back-up and recovery plans to make sure that if the system breaks down data is not lost
- working closely with programmers, IT project managers or web developers
- keeping up to date with data protection laws.

Pay

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

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

Salaries tend to start around £28,000 a year. With experience earnings can be £40,000 to £50,000 a year or more and at senior level could be up to £60,000 a year or more.

Salaries may include performance-related pay or bonus schemes.

Conditions

- You work normal office hours from Monday to Friday. You may have to be on call in case of problems out of hours.
- It can be a high-pressure job as many companies rely on the smooth running of IT and databases.
- You may have to do evening or weekend work to meet deadlines or carry out upgrades and maintenance out with office hours.
- You might have to travel to other companies and spend time away from home.

Getting In

- Most database administrators have a degree (SCQF Levels 9-11) in a computing subject such as computing science, information technology or software engineering. Entry to most degrees requires 4-5 Highers, usually including Maths.
- Some entrants have a degree in maths or a business subject. Entry requirements are 4-5 Highers, often including Maths.
- If you have a non-computing degree, you can do a postgraduate (SCQF Level 11) computer-related conversion course.
- You need to know how to use structured query language (SQL) and database management systems (DBMS), such as SQLServer, Oracle and Sybase (there are many more).
- You might get in with a HND (SCQF Level 8) in a computing subject on a company training scheme. You usually need 2 Highers for entry to an HND course.
- Studying for a relevant Foundation Apprenticeship while in fifth and sixth year at school could count towards entry to a course. Entry requirements vary between colleges, but you usually require some subjects at National 5 including English and Maths.
- You will sometimes start off working in systems programming or design (see the job profile for [Software Engineer or Developer](#)).
- For some jobs a driving licence may be essential.

Jobs are in the technical departments of all sectors in industry and commerce: banks, building societies, computer and telecommunications companies, hospitals, insurance companies, retail, transport, central and local government, colleges and universities.

Job opportunities are good, but entry is competitive.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- broad technical knowledge
- good communication skills
- an analytical and methodical approach
- an understanding of data query languages, such as T-SQL and PL/SQL
- good organisational skills
- excellent problem solving skills
- good negotiating and team working skills.

You need to be able to:

- work under pressure, make decisions and meet deadlines
- understand the client's business
- keep up to date with new developments
- understand information legislation such as the Data Protection Act.

Training

- Training can be on the job with part time study.
- [BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT](#) offers a number of different qualifications.
- It helps to have training and skills in SQL Server, Oracle or Unix.
- There are qualifications available through software development companies.
- There are professional certification schemes available, such as Microsoft Certified Solutions Expert: Data Platform or Business Intelligence, and Oracle Database certification.

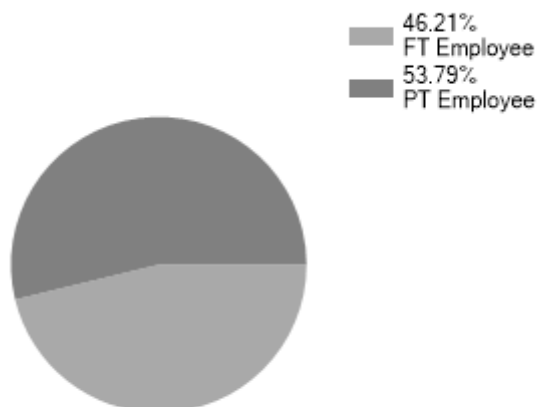
Getting On

- You might move into project management.
- You could become manager of a technical department.
- You could work as a freelance consultant.

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

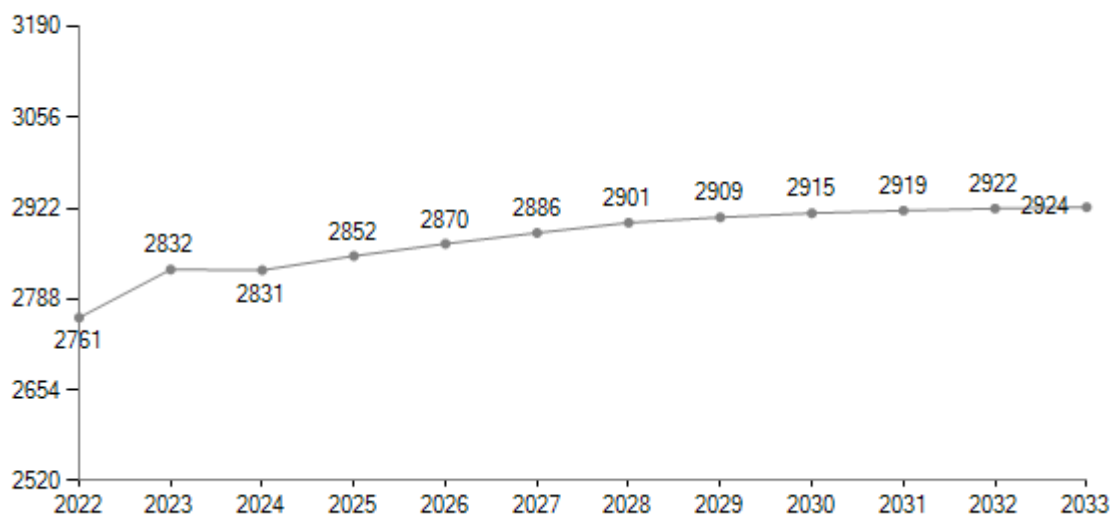


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)