

Sculptor

Sculptors design and create three dimensional (3D) forms or models as a way of artistic expression. They can specialise in areas such as figurative statues or abstract work.

The Work

You could be:

- researching the subject and deciding on which materials would suit it best
- sketching a design and perhaps making a model before starting on the sculpture itself
- using materials such as clay, plastic, resin, stone, metal, wood or sand to create the sculpture
- using a range of methods and tools to shape the material – this could involve carving, welding or moulding
- using an original sculpture to make a mould for casting in metal
- specialising in particular types of work, such as ice sculptures for particular events or metal sculptures using welding techniques
- placing large models in public buildings or outdoors
- promoting and selling your work, or applying for funding from public or private organisations
- combining studio work with teaching or being an artist in residence.

Pay

Pay rates vary, depending on:

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

Because most sculptors work freelance, it is difficult to give a starting salary. Fees can vary depending on the size and nature of the work.

Some sculptors find work as an artist in residence, which can last for any period between one month and one year. The pay for this varies widely and some residencies may include free accommodation and use of a studio and equipment.

Conditions

- You would work in a studio, a gallery or from home.
- The conditions might be dirty and dusty, depending on the materials you use.
- Your hours could be irregular, including evenings and weekends.
- At times you might be under pressure to meet deadlines.
- You would work alone most of the time.
- You may have to wear eye goggles and safety boots.
- You might have to travel to meet clients and attend exhibitions, in order to promote and sell your work.
- The work can be physically demanding, depending on the materials and methods you use.

Getting In

- You usually need a degree (SCQF Level 9-10) in fine art or art and design, specialising in sculpture.
- There are BA Honours degrees (SCQF Level 10) Fine Art (Sculpture) at Robert Gordon University and and Fine Art – Sculpture and Environmental Art at Glasgow School of Art.
- For entry to a degree course you need 4-5 Highers, normally including English and Art and Design. You may complete a foundation year in art before choosing a specialism in year 2 of your degree.
- You also need a good portfolio of artwork.
- 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 (SCQF Levels 4-6) (formal entry requirements not always needed) or an HNC (SCQF Level 7) (2 Highers normally needed for entry) in an art and design subject. This might lead to further study for a HND (SCQF Level 8) or a degree.
- If you are exceptionally talented you might be able to work as a sculptor without qualifications, provided you have a very good body of work to demonstrate your ability.

For art school courses you need to apply through UCAS.

It is very difficult to become established as a sculptor. Most sculptors work freelance and very few earn a full living from their sculpture, particularly in the early stages.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- artistic, creative and imaginative, with a good eye for design and proportion
- good with your hands when using tools
- patient and accurate
- confident – to promote your work to customers
- energetic and flexible
- good at networking and negotiating when looking for work.

You need to be able to:

- lift or move heavy materials or items
- work to a brief if a client has requested a piece of work
- work alone for long periods
- accept criticism of your work
- work under pressure to meet deadlines.

Training

- You might train with an established sculptor.
- This would allow you to gain experience in creating successful pieces and promoting them to potential buyers.

Getting On

- You may start by having another full time job, such as teaching or tutoring, and sculpting in your spare time.
- With experience, you may get work as a sculptor in residence – making pieces, running workshops and teaching in local community groups.
- If you build up a good reputation, you may be asked to design sculptures for specific organisations or individual clients.
- Sculptors charge fees, which vary depending on the size and nature of the work and how well known you are.
- It can take a long time to establish a reputation that allows you to live by sculpting alone. If you do not become well known or there isn't enough work, you might find it very difficult to earn an income and you might always need to have another job.
- If you are successful enough you could open your own studio or gallery.
- Many sculptors also work in teaching, lecturing, community arts or art therapy.

More Information

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

Contacts

a-n The Artists Information Company

Tel: 0300 330 0706

Website: www.a-n.co.uk

Creative Scotland

Email: enquiries@creativescotland.com

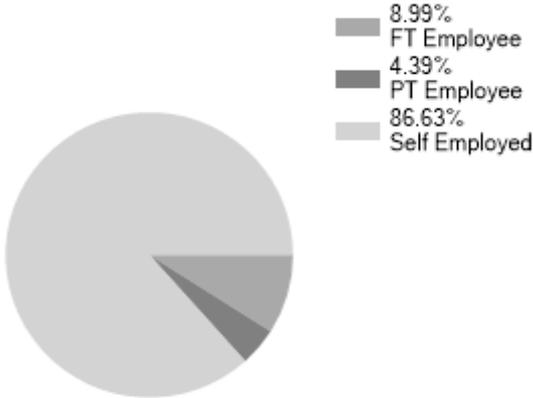
Website: www.creativescotland.com

Website (2): opportunities.creativescotland.com

Facebook: www.facebook.com/CreativeScotland

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

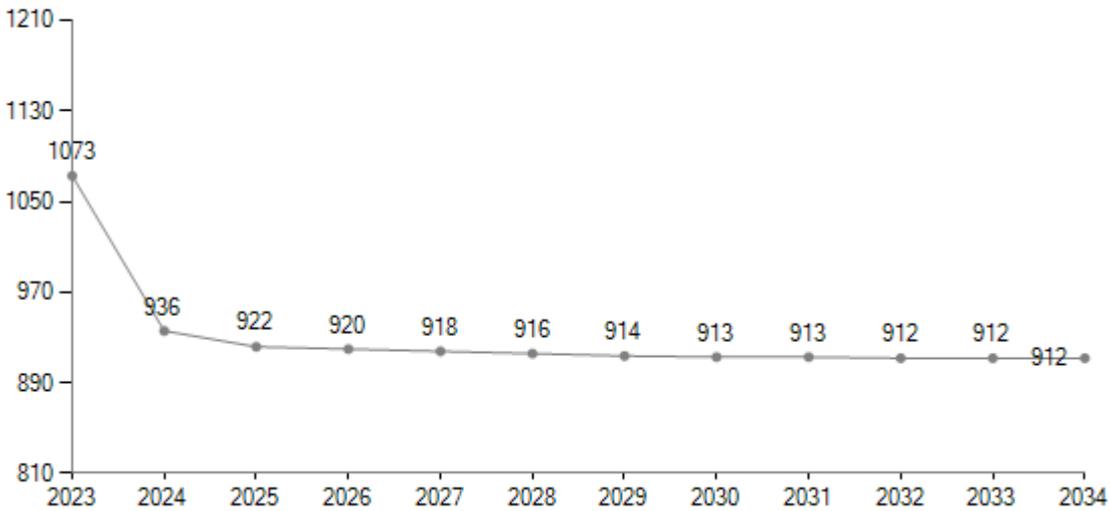


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)