

Museum Assistant or Visitor Assistant

Museum assistants or visitor assistants give information and help to visitors. They may also help set up exhibitions, clean displays, take entrance money and sell items in the venue shop.

The Work

You could be:

- greeting visitors, giving directions, explaining exhibits and telling visitors about the attraction
- helping curators to set up, move and change exhibits and collections
- assisting with packing and unpacking items that arrive from or are being sent to other museums
- giving tours to individuals or groups
- taking admission money, if there is a charge, and issuing tickets
- selling catalogues, books, postcards and other souvenirs in the venue shop
- patrolling the museum or visitor centre, guarding items on display and checking visitors' bags for security purposes
- general reception duties such as answering phones, maintaining records or taking bookings
- helping to keep the areas clean and tidy.

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.

Museum or visitor assistants' salaries can be in the range of £20,200 to £26,000 a year, depending on responsibility and length of experience. Salaries for supervisory roles are around £30,000 a year.

Conditions

- The duties vary a lot depending on the size and type of museum or gallery.
- You usually have to wear a uniform.
- In a few themed museums, you may have to wear historical costume.
- You mostly work indoors, although you would work outdoors in some museums and attractions.
- You may do shift work in larger museums to cover evenings and weekends.

Getting In

- A good general education is useful. Some employers may ask for subjects at National 4 or 5 preferably including English and Maths.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Creative and Cultural working towards the Diploma in Cultural Venue Operations at SCQF Level 6.

- It helps if you have some voluntary work experience. Some places are staffed solely by volunteers, such as small museums and attractions.
- You can often get part time or seasonal work. This may lead to full time work.
- Some employers require you to have experience working with the public and customer care.
- You would require a satisfactory PVG (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) check to show you are suitable for this type of work. Contact Disclosure Scotland for details.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- pleasant and helpful
- enthusiastic and interested in the exhibits
- able to provide excellent customer service
- alert, observant and security conscious
- trustworthy and able to work unsupervised.

You need to have:

- a smart appearance
- good communication skills
- the ability to work as part of a team
- a good memory for information about exhibits
- the ability to relate to people of all ages
- enthusiasm for meeting people.

Training

- If doing a Modern Apprenticeship you would complete the Diploma in Cultural Venue Operations at SCQF Level 6.
- Some employers provide on the job training leading to relevant qualifications.
- Your induction training would include learning all about the museum and its exhibits, and perhaps include first aid and sales training.
- Most large museums and heritage centres have well-established volunteer programmes and provide training for their volunteer attendants.

Getting On

- You might go on to study for the SVQ in Museums and Galleries Practice at SCQF Level 7.
- With experience on the job you may be able to become a supervisor then manager.
- There are more chances for promotion in larger museums and attractions in major cities.

More Information

The following recruitment websites may be useful when looking for employment:

- [Creative Scotland Opportunities](#)
- [Myjobscotland](#) (Scottish Local Government Jobs Portal)
- [Museum Jobs](#)
- [Association of Scottish Visitor Attractions \(ASVA\)](#).

Contacts

Historic Environment Scotland (HES)

Tel: 0131 668 8600

Website: www.historicenvironment.scot

Facebook: www.facebook.com/historicenvscotland

Museums Association

Tel: 020 7566 7800

Email: info@museumsassociation.org

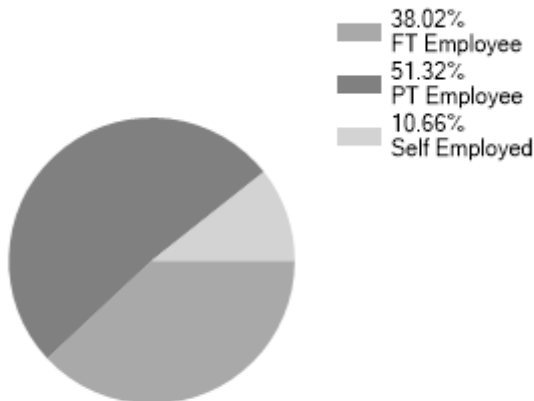
Website: www.museumsassociation.org/home

X: @MuseumsAssoc

Facebook: www.facebook.com/MuseumsAssoc

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

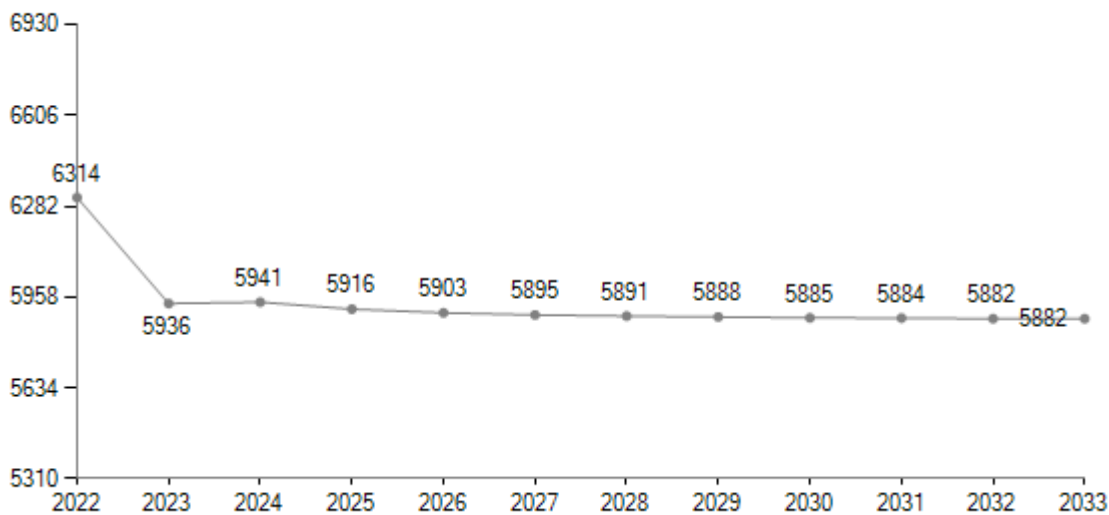


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)