

Visual Merchandiser

Visual merchandisers, sometimes known as display designers, arrange attractive displays of goods, in a shop window or in the shop itself. They may also be involved in business aspects, such as monitoring sales and analysing figures.

The Work

You could be:

- designing a display for each of the shop windows or for various areas within the store, perhaps promoting a particular range or product
- drawing plans using computer-aided design (CAD) software, sometimes sketching by hand
- carrying out research on current lifestyles and trends, making sure designs apply to company guidelines
- planning how to use limited space and arranging lighting effects
- arranging models, screens, fabrics and other materials and hiring or making props
- pressing clothes and arranging them on mannequins, arranging other types of products and displaying item prices
- training store staff in garment or product presentation
- keeping the display in good condition and at the end of the season taking down old displays
- monitoring sales and giving feedback to head office.

Online Visual Merchandisers are responsible for the visual content across websites and social media.

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 visual merchandisers in the UK tend to be in the range of around £20,000 to £25,000 a year. With experience this can rise to £30,000 a year and visual merchandising managers can earn up to over £50,000 a year.

Some visual merchandisers work freelance. They charge a fee which varies depending on the display.

Conditions

- The work is mostly on shop floors and in shop windows.
- Weekend and evening work is common.
- If your employer has more than one branch you may have to travel around an allocated area.
- You will probably work as part of a team, but you may have to work alone sometimes.
- You would need to move and arrange goods, so you might have to lift heavy items and work up ladders.

Getting In

- You do not always need formal qualifications, but your chances are better if you have some.
- You could take an NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 5-6), HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in design or art and design, perhaps with an option in display design.
- City of Glasgow College offers an NQ in Fashion and Retail at SCQF Level 6, which includes a module with an introduction to fashion display. For entry you need 3 subjects at National 5 including English.
- You do not always need qualifications to get into an NC, but for HNC or HND you need 1-2 Highers usually including Art and Design.
- You need a portfolio of artwork for entry to college for art and design courses.
- You could get in by first getting a retail sales job, and gaining experience by helping with visual display work in the store.
- Some employers ask for retail experience.
- You should be fit as there is a lot of lifting, carrying, bending and kneeling.
- You may need a driving licence for travel to different stores.

Entry is competitive. You could work for department stores, chain stores or independent shops. You might also work for design companies, carrying out projects for different clients. You might find opportunities in film and TV work, in museums, in airports, tourist centres or in visitor attractions. Jobs may be advertised in your local Jobcentre Plus office and on the [Find a Job](#) website.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- an interest in design, fashion and consumer products
- IT skills
- good communication skills
- business and marketing knowledge.

You need to be:

- imaginative, artistic and creative with an eye for colour, shape and visual effect
- patient, neat and adaptable
- good with your hands (preferably skilled in DIY) and able to improvise with materials to hand
- willing to keep up with fashion and consumer trends
- aware of health and safety issues
- able to work alone or as part of a team
- able to work quickly to meet tight deadlines.

Training

- If you get a job without having qualifications, you would train on the job and study part time for a qualification such as an SVQ in Retail (Visual Merchandising) at SCQF Level 6.
- Otherwise, training is through experience on the job.

- The British Display Society offers a distance learning Certificate in Display and Visual Merchandising. See their website for details.

Getting On

- You might start as a display assistant, or retail assistant, moving on to visual merchandiser.
- In larger companies, you might become visual merchandising assistant and then manager.
- With experience you could work freelance.
- You might move into exhibition design, interior design or set design.

More Information

Getting work as a freelance visual merchandiser depends on becoming well known and established. If you work freelance you must work to build up contacts and keep regularly in touch with them. This can take some time.

Contacts

British Display Society

Tel: 020 8856 2030

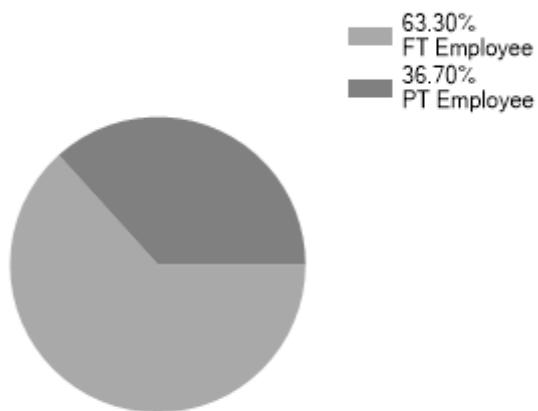
Email: admin@britishdisplayociety.co.uk

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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

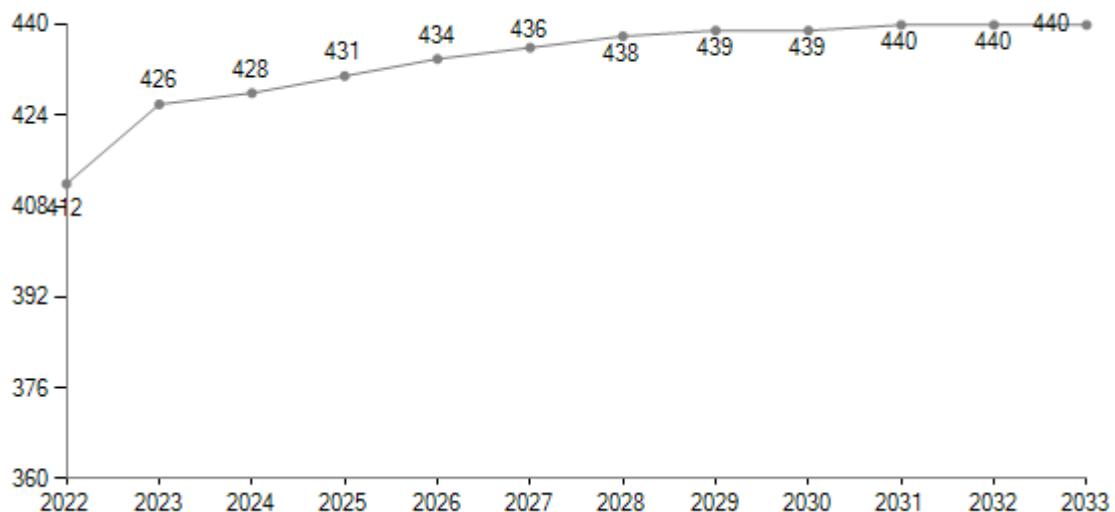


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)