

Character Artist

Character artists create and draw the visual elements of a computer game such as the characters, environment, vehicles, weapons and other props. You could also be working on films creating characters or scenery.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing the brief with a games designer and lead artist
- creating concept sketches and storyboards in 2D or 3D
- specialising in one area of a game, such as human figures or weapons
- working with other artists on a film production, each specialising in a particular area
- working as a 3D modeller, building up the characters or scenery, taking account of technical capabilities and game platform
- adding texture to the drawings to suit the brief, and to bring the game or film to life
- using specialist software such as Maya, Corel Painter, Mudbox and Photoshop to create your drawings
- involved with all aspects of character modelling including anatomical, cloth and hand-surface modelling
- creating and taking responsibility for art assets according to the game specification.

Pay

Pay rates vary, depending on:

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

Newly qualified artists may start off earning from £20,000 to £22,000 a year. With experience this can rise to between £25,000 and £30,000 a year. Lead artists can earn up to £48,000 or more.

Freelance artists charge fees depending on the type of work done. Amounts depends on work done and your experience.

Conditions

- You will spend most of your time working at a computer, usually in an open plan office.
- You may have to travel to meet clients if you are working for a creative agency.
- Many artists working on films are freelance.
- You would work as part of a team.
- Your hours could be long and irregular.
- You may have to work within tight deadlines.
- You would probably work some evenings and weekends, especially when approaching a deadline.

Getting In

- Most entrants will have a degree (SCQF Levels 9-11) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in fine art, graphic design or illustration.
- For entry to an HND you usually need 1-2 Highers, and for a degree, 4-5 Highers, normally including English and Art and Design.
- You will need a good portfolio of artwork.
- Abertay University offers BA Hons Computer Arts. You will require 4 Highers at ABBB including Art and Design or Photography, Graphic Communication or Design and Manufacture. This course has been awarded the [ScreenSkills](#) Tick for the high standard of education provided, and the degree to which it prepares you for a games career.
- You should be competent in using 3D graphics packages such as 3D Studio Max and Maya, and 2D packages such as Photoshop.
- A work placement during your degree would provide a useful way to gain some industry experience.

For art school courses you need to apply through UCAS.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- excellent communication skills
- the ability to pay attention to detail
- imagination and creativity
- excellent IT skills
- resilience to receive critiques and feedback on your work
- knowledge of anatomy and architecture.

You need to be able to:

- work under pressure and be able to meet deadlines
- interpret other people's ideas
- work as part of a team.

Training

- Your training would be ongoing as you gain experience and develop your technique.
- You could join a professional body such as [The AOI](#) or [AnimatedWomenUK](#).
- You could attend training events and workshops to keep up to date with the latest trends and software packages.
- You may have to learn in house software packages, depending on the company you are working for.

Getting On

- You must build up a good, up to date portfolio to show to possible employers.
- You could progress to be a team leader, senior artist, or lead artist.
- There is more work available in the games industry than the film industry.

More Information

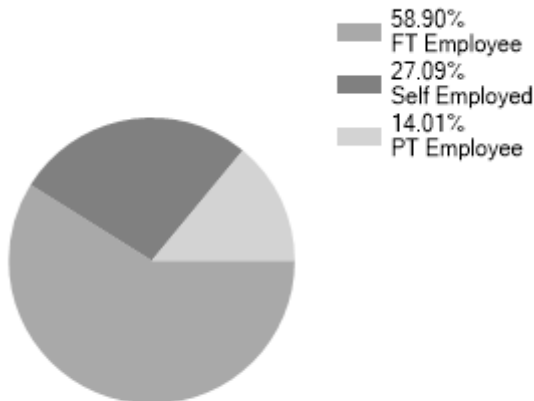
For more information please see organisations listed below:

- [Creative and Cultural Skills](#)
- [Tiga](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

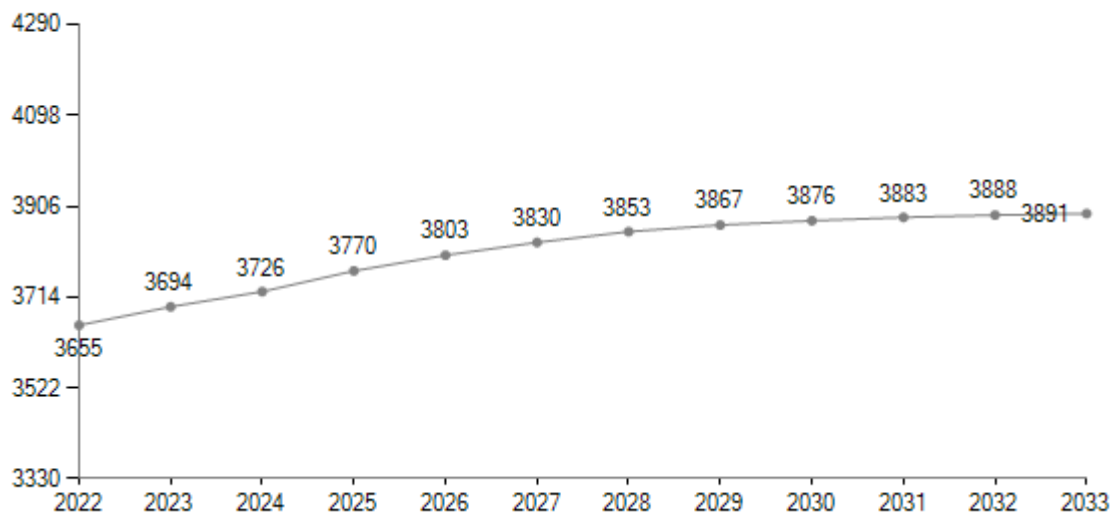


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)