

Games Tester

A games tester tests computer games at the development stage to find out if there are any bugs in the software. They test all types of game: puzzle, adventure, role-play, platform, simulation, combat, shooters and sports.

Games testers can also be known as quality assurance (QA) technicians.

The Work

You could be:

- methodically playing a particular part of a game and creating, following and updating test scripts (cases) to find bugs and glitches
- testing all levels and aspects of a game: graphics, text, sound, image and video animation
- recording any faults (bugs) you find into a quality management system – this might be a spreadsheet or a special tracking tool, such as Bugzilla or JIRA
- checking for localisation problems, where games are being developed for overseas markets
- reporting on the playability (how the user interacts with the game) and suggesting improvements
- checking that the game is compatible with hardware such as processors and graphics cards
- comparing the games with other titles based on your knowledge of the market
- working with other testers on multi-player games.

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 at around £20,000 to £27,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £30,000 a year. Experienced team leaders might earn up to £35,000 a year.

You might earn extra through profit sharing, bonus payments and performance-related pay.

Conditions

- You will spend most of your working time at a computer, usually in an open plan office.
- Although you work basic office hours, you may have to work overtime to meet deadlines.
- The work can be very repetitive as you repeat the same tasks over and over again until bugs are fixed.
- You are usually assigned games to test and do not get to choose.

Getting In

- There is no one particular way into this job but entry is competitive and entrants increasingly have a

relevant degree (SCQF Levels 9-11).

- A number of colleges and universities in Scotland offer gaming related courses, ranging from HNC (SCQF Level 7) to degrees.
- Entry requirements vary from some subjects at National 4 or 5 for an HNC, up to 4-5 Highers for a degree, usually including Maths and a computing or technological subject.
- You need to be an experienced and skilled games player and have a detailed knowledge of games platforms and styles.
- You might have to complete an entry test to see how many bugs you can find.
- The ScreenSkills website lists endorsed degree courses for the computer games industry.
- Knowledge of one or more languages other than English, for example German or Danish, is useful and may be required as some games are designed for the export market.
- 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 need relevant subjects at National 5 such as Maths, Physics or Computing Science.
- It helps to go to games events and to keep up to date through gaming websites.
- Depending on the company you work for and the types of games they produce, you may need to be 18 or over.

Jobs are often advertised on the internet. There is a lot of competition for jobs.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a passion for and excellent knowledge of gaming
- a logical, methodical approach
- good analytical and problem solving skills
- excellent observation and attention to detail
- patience, perseverance and good concentration
- good communication skills
- a willingness to do repetitive tasks.

You need to be able to:

- adapt to ever-changing technology
- work either alone or in a team – you have to work closely with colleagues
- work under pressure to meet deadlines.

Training

- Training is usually on the job.
- You could gain professional certification in software testing through [BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT](#), in partnership with the [International Software Testing Qualifications Board](#) (ISTQB).

Getting On

- Working as a games tester is a good way of getting into the computer games industry for other roles.
- After gaining experience you might be able to move into games design work.
- You might progress in the testing area and get a team leader or more senior position, managing teams of testers or organising test plans or schedules.

More Information

- The University of Abertay has the UK's first university Centre of Excellence for Computer Games Education.
- BAFTA Young Games Designers is a competition with different categories for 10-14 and 15-18 year olds. You can write and illustrate your idea to enter the 'Concept Award' or make your own game to enter the 'Games-Making Award'. See the [BAFTA Young Game Developer](#) website for more details.

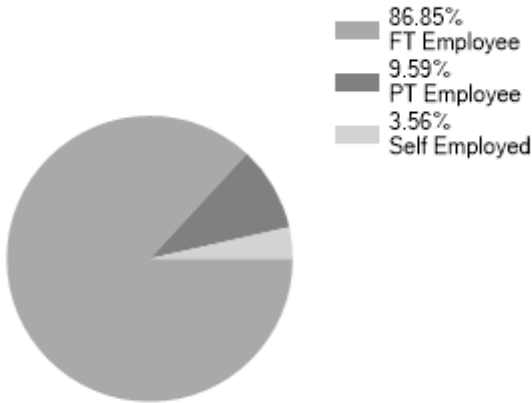
For more information please see organisations listed below:

- [ScreenSkills](#)
- [TIGA](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

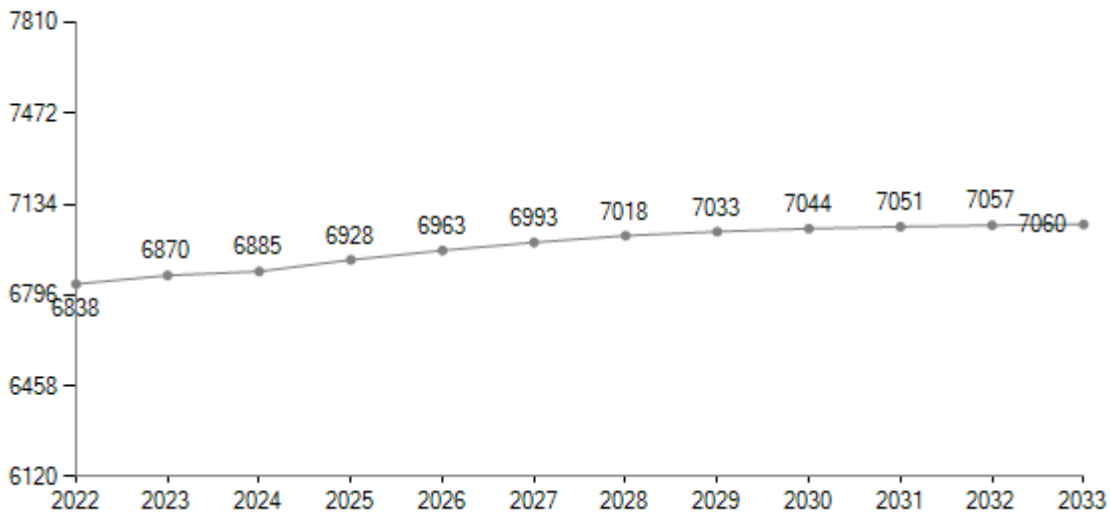


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)