Systems Analyst

A systems analyst examines the specific needs of an organisation and designs new IT systems to improve efficiency and productivity. They are also called business systems analysts.

The Work

You could be:

- analysing business structures and needs
- studying the existing IT system and data, and deciding how to make it more effective, or designing a new one
- using software development lifecycle models and project management frameworks, such as Agile, Waterfall, or PRINCE2
- using data and process modelling to document existing systems and design new ones
- producing feasibility and costing reports
- writing technical documents for the developers to follow when creating the system
- monitoring the installation and testing of the system
- ensuring that the project is within budget and meets deadlines
- training staff how to use the new system and producing a manual for them.

You might specialise in systems for business, scientific or engineering environments.

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 can start at around £25,000 a year. With experience this can rise to between £30,000 and £55,000 a year or more.

If you do contract work the daily rate varies.

Conditions

- You will usually be office based.
- You generally work office hours from Monday to Friday.
- You might sometimes have to work evenings or weekends to meet deadlines.
- You will have to travel to meet clients in different organisations.

Getting In

- Entrants are mostly graduates with technical skills, although you may get in with an HND (SCQF Level 8) and suitable experience. Appropriate subjects include computing systems, information systems or information technology.
- Graduates in other subjects may take a postgraduate 'conversion' course (SCQF Level 11) leading to a Diploma or MSc in information technology, computer systems or information systems.
- For entry to an HND you normally require 1-2 Highers plus some subjects at National 5. Degree courses (SCQF Levels 9-11) require 4-5 Highers, sometimes including Maths.
- You may start as a developer and after 2-3 years' experience move into systems analysis.
- Some entrants have IT project management skills.

Jobs are in banks, insurance, construction, utility companies, engineering and manufacturing companies, local and central government, universities, software houses and IT consultants.

This is an expanding job area and there is competition for vacancies.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a knowledge of software development
- knowledge of programming languages and data modelling
- excellent analytical skills
- a logical approach to problem solving
- an understanding of business and business processes
- good communication skills
- the ability to ask the right questions
- good report writing and presentation skills.

You need to be able to:

- keep up to date with new developments
- manage a project and meet deadlines
- work within a budget
- explain the systems to staff who may not have technical knowledge
- persuade people to adopt new systems
- lead and work as part of a team.

Training

- Most companies offer ongoing training.
- You would probably take short, certified courses run by software manufacturers.
- You can study for relevant professional qualifications through professional organisations such as BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, which now also incorporates the Institute for the Management of Information Systems (IMIS).
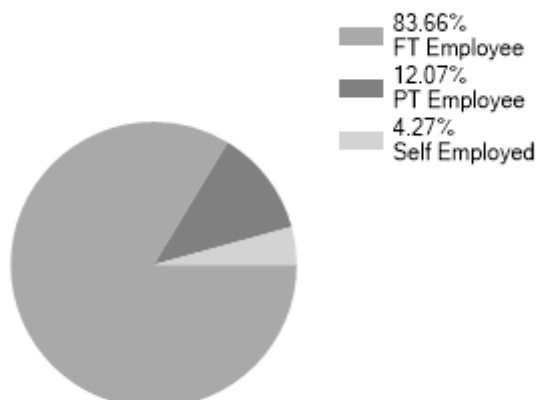- You may study towards qualifications in project management, such as PRINCE2.

Getting On

- You might move on to become a senior analyst or a project manager.
- You could become a freelance consultant.

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

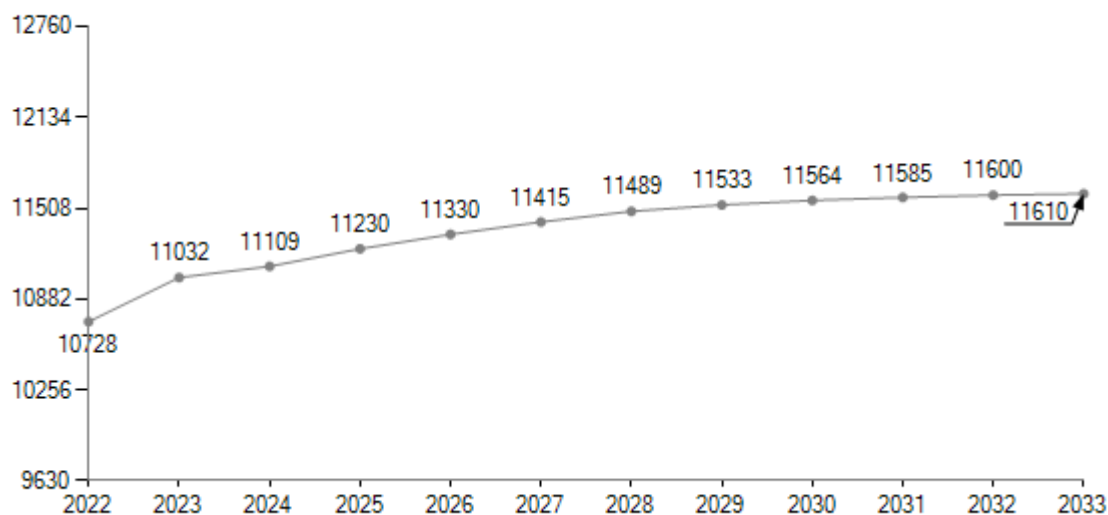83.66%
FT Employee

12.07%
PT Employee

4.27%
Self Employed

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by LMI for All

Predicted Employment in Scotland

10728 11032 11109 11230 11330 11415 11489 11533 11564 11585 11600 11610

LMI data powered by Lightcast