Web Developer

Web developers design, construct and maintain the back end applications and databases of websites and web-based systems, for individuals and organisations. Job titles sometimes include the names of relevant programming languages, such as .NET or Java.

The Work

You could be:

- discussing the project with the client and producing a specification outlining the technical requirements
- programming the back end (underlying functions), for example content management systems, using languages such as Java, C# and PHP
- developing prototypes, testing, debugging and re-coding until all requirements are met and the application is fully functional
- developing databases to support applications and the queries to extract data for display to users
- developing new applications to be integrated into an existing website, for example an online payment system
- checking that the application works on different platforms, for example PCs and mobile devices
- maintaining web servers to ensure security and prevent disruptions to service
- meeting with colleagues and clients to review progress.

There is often some overlap between the job a web developer does and that of a front end developer.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Pay rates vary widely, depending on:

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

The starting salary can be in the range of £20,000 to £30,000 a year. With experience this can rise to £35,000 a year and senior or lead web developers can up to around £60,000 a year, sometimes more.

If you work freelance, your income will vary, depending on the contracts you get.

Conditions

- You will generally work normal office hours from Monday to Friday, but may have to work some weekends or evenings to meet deadlines.
- You might sometimes have to travel to visit clients and spend time away from home.
- You will spend most of your time working at a computer.

Getting In

- Entrants usually have a degree (SCQF Levels 9-11) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in a subject such as web development, computing science, software engineering or information systems.
- There are specialised postgraduate (SCQF Level 11) courses for graduates in computing subjects.
- If you have a degree in a non-computing subject you could take a postgraduate conversion course.
- For entry to an HND course you normally require 1-2 Highers plus some subjects at National 5. For entry to a degree course you need 4-5 Highers.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in IT and Telecommunications at SCQF Level 6, then work your way up with experience and further specialist training, or a Technical Apprenticeship at SCQF Level 8.
- You may need to do a technical test as part of a job interview.
- Knowledge of databases, content management systems and web technologies is helpful.
- Studying for the IT: Software Development Foundation Apprenticeship (FA), which you can start in S5 and study at school and college, can count towards entry to a course. Entry requirements vary between colleges, but you usually need 3 subjects at National 5 including English and Maths. Some colleges also ask for Physics.

There are jobs in almost all industries, including retail, IT, education, the media, central and local government, finance, the communications industry and health care. Jobs are advertised in the press and on the internet.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a logical mind
- good programming skills
- strong problem solving skills
- an understanding of web technologies and standards
- good communication skills
- a good understanding of how people interact with websites and web applications
- an up to date knowledge of developments in IT.

You need to be able to:

- listen to your client's ideas and interpret them
- work accurately under pressure and meet tight deadlines
- understand your client's business needs
- work well alone and as part of a team.

Training

- Training can be on the job with part time study.
- For the Modern Apprenticeship in IT and Telecommunications at SCQF Level 6 you would study the Diploma for Information Technology and Telecommunications Professionals at SCQF Level 6.
- You would usually complete other short courses whilst working.
- You can take short courses to fill gaps in your knowledge and keep up to date with new packages.

- You can work towards professional qualifications in programming and web applications through BCS, the Chartered Institute for IT, which also incorporates the Institute for the Management of Information Systems.
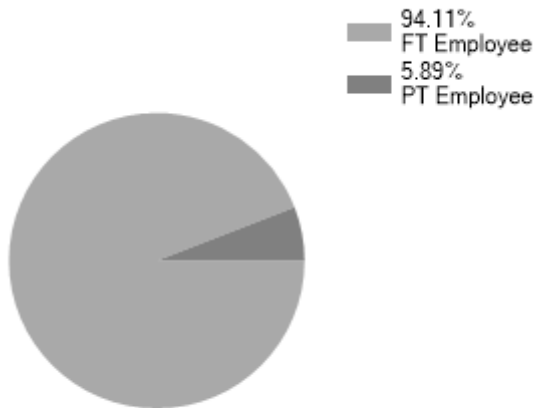
Getting On

- With experience, you might become a project manager.
- You might move on to specialise in other areas of information technology, such as systems analysis (see the Systems Analyst job profile).
- You could work freelance or do contract work (usually jobs lasting for a few months at a time).
- With language skills you may be able to work abroad.

Contacts

Statistics

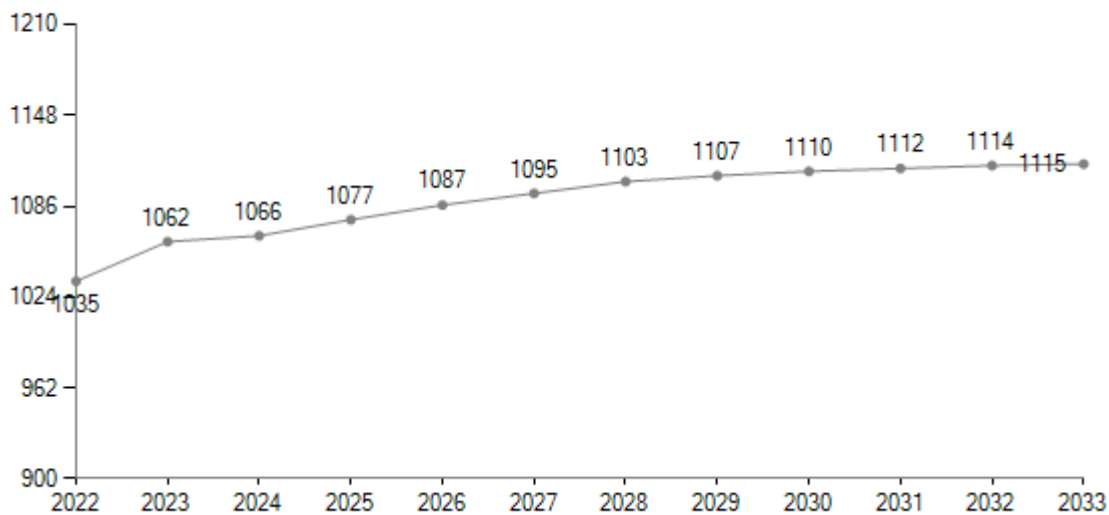Employment Status UK %

94.11%
FT Employee

5.89%
PT Employee

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