

## Architect

Architects design new buildings and adapt or restore existing buildings. They are actively involved in every stage of a building project, from original idea to completion.

### The Work

You could be:

- consulting with your client and coming up with a design concept which takes account of the use of the building, the kind of site it will be on, any environmental issues and the budget
- preparing a design proposal using computer-aided design (CAD) software such as AutoCAD and building information modelling (BIM) processes, ensuring that it meets building regulations and safety standards
- once the design is agreed, producing detailed drawings to send to the quantity surveyor for costings, and to builders for competitive tender
- preparing planning applications to be submitted to local authority
- visiting the site, attending progress meetings to ensure that the project is on schedule, meets agreed standards and is within budget
- making sure that any impact on the environment is limited
- working closely with other professionals in the team such as surveyors, engineers and contractors to solve problems.

### 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.

For self-employed architects most of the income may derive from negotiated fees. The salary for students on their placement after year 3 of their degree (Part 1) would earn around £25,000 a year. This rises up to between £24,000 to £30,000 on completion of (Part 2). A newly registered architect on completion of Part 3 can earn £31,500 to £37,500 a year. Architects with over 5 years experience can earn £36,000 to £45,000.

Senior or associate architects may earn up to £60,000 or more a year, depending on the size of the firm.

### Conditions

- You work in an office, but spend time visiting clients, planning departments, and builders.
- You visit sites in all weathers.
- You have to wear safety clothing on site including a hard hat and protective boots.
- You may have to work evenings and weekends to meet deadlines and spend time away from home.
- The company you work for, or you if you are self-employed, must be insured against the possibility of future litigation in the event that one of your buildings develops serious structural faults.

## Getting In

- You need a degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) recognised by the [Architects Registration Board \(ARB\)](#) and the [Royal Institute of British Architects \(RIBA\)](#). There are five schools of architecture in Scotland offering recognised degrees.
- For entry to a course in architecture, you need 4-5 good Highers, usually including English and Maths or Physics. Art and Design is preferred. Most schools will ask for a portfolio of your work.
- Degree courses in architecture last 5 years. On completion of the first three years (known as Part 1), you would work in an architectural practice for one year before returning to complete years 4 and 5 (Part 2).
- To qualify as an architect you must then complete Part 3 – a further period of 24 months in practice before sitting the professional exam to gain professional registration with ARB.
- There is a new qualifications system being phased in - it is expected that the new master's-level qualifications, practice qualifications and combined qualifications will start to be offered in the second half of 2026. More information is available on the [Architects Registration Board website](#).

The majority of architects work in small private architectural practices. Other jobs are with local authorities, the Civil Service, the Health Service, industry or commerce.

## What Does It Take

You need:

- excellent communication skills
- good imagination and spatial awareness
- practical skill and technical knowledge
- good maths skills
- a strong interest in buildings: their structure, the materials and processes used in their construction, and their impact upon the environment
- excellent IT skills including CAD software
- a willingness to accept responsibility.

You should be able to:

- accept and learn from criticism
- negotiate with and persuade others
- manage projects and people
- analyse data
- work under pressure to deadlines.

## Training

- Once qualified, you must keep your knowledge up to date throughout your career by doing short courses for continuous professional development (CPD).
- If you register as a Chartered member of RIBA you must complete 35 hours of CPD each year. This can be done through online learning.

## Getting On

- You usually start as a salaried employee in a practice.
- If you work for a big firm you may find you're doing small scale detailed work all the time, whereas if you work for a small firm you get a wide range of responsibility.
- Once you are experienced you can get into a partnership, open your own practice, or move into freelance consultancy work.
- There are openings abroad, for example in the USA and the Middle East.
- There are also opportunities in fields such as property development, lecturing and journalism.

## More Information

These organisations are a source of good information for architects.

- [Architecture+DesignScotland](#)
- [Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland](#)

## Contacts

### GoConstruct

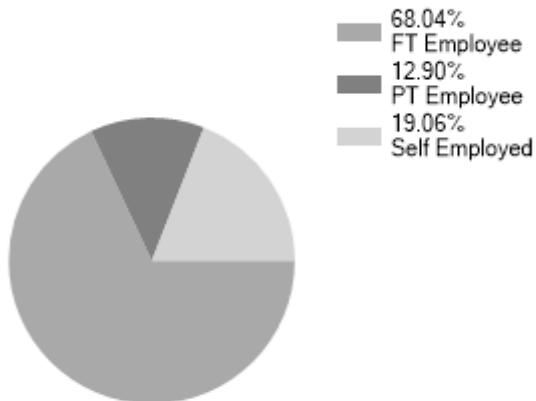
Website: [www.goconstruct.org](http://www.goconstruct.org)

X: @GoConstructUK

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/goconstructuk](https://www.facebook.com/goconstructuk)

## Statistics

Employment Status UK %

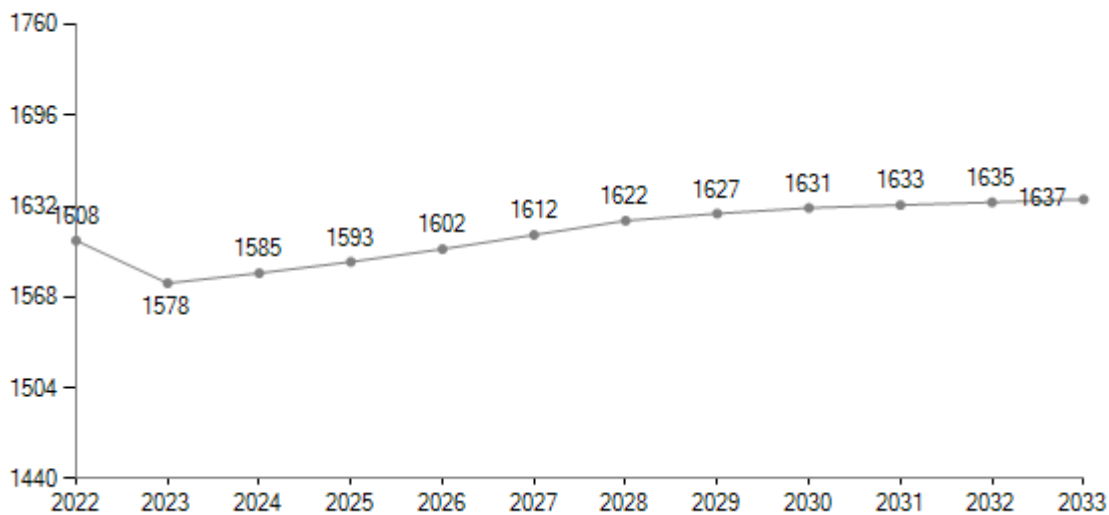


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)