

Town Planner

A town planner makes decisions about the best way to manage and develop towns, cities and the countryside. They must balance economic, social and environmental factors and can specialise in one particular area, such as transport, planning policy or conservation. They are also called planning officers.

The Work

You might carry out research and consult with experts to collect relevant information on:

- population growth rate and population dynamics (proportion of children to proportion of older people)
- housing needs and needs for services: schools, shops, leisure facilities
- transport requirements, both in terms of public transport and roads
- preservation of historic buildings
- impact on the environment: wildlife conservation, increased pollution, protection of areas of natural beauty
- requirement to pay compensation if carrying out compulsory purchase.

You could also be:

- using geographical information systems (GIS) and computer-aided design (CAD) to produce plans
- carrying out public consultation activities
- assessing and making decisions on planning applications
- redesigning street and road layouts
- writing complex reports and policy documents
- providing advice on planning and legislation to colleagues and other professionals.

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.

Starting salaries for graduate or assistant planners are likely to be in the region of £20,000 to £25,000 a year, rising to between £36,000 and £45,000 a year for senior planners with experience. Chief planning officers and heads of departments can earn £55,000 up to £100,000 a year.

Conditions

- You will work mainly in an office.
- You will travel to go to meetings and visit sites.
- You will usually work normal hours, but there might be some evening and weekend work.

Getting In

For chartered status, town planners must follow one of the routes which the [Royal Town Planning Institute \(RTPI\)](#) approves.

- The most direct route is to complete a relevant, accredited degree (SCQF Level 9-10) in town planning. See the RTPI website for a list of accredited courses. The usual entry requirement for a degree course is 4-5 Highers.
- You can complete a postgraduate course (SCQF Level 11) accredited by the RTPI if you have a non-accredited degree in a relevant subject, such as architecture, surveying, geography or environmental science.
- Dundee, Glasgow and Heriot-Watt Universities offer accredited undergraduate and postgraduate courses.
- There are three routes available which are competency based. See the RTPI website for full details.
- You will need a driving licence to travel between site visits.

Most town planners still work for the local authorities and for other public bodies, such as urban development corporations, health authorities, tourist boards and environmental organisations. However a growing number of planners now work in the private sector, as consultants, or in research establishments.

What Does It Take

You need:

- imagination and vision
- a good eye for detail
- an analytical and logical approach
- project management skills
- excellent communication and presentation skills
- good negotiating skills
- the ability to make fair judgements, even if unpopular
- the ability to work to deadlines while under pressure
- initiative and problem solving skills.

Training

- To become a chartered town planner you need to join the RTPI as a Licentiate member and complete a further two years' practical experience on the job after you graduate. This is known as the Assessment of Professional Competence (APC) pathway. There are three pathways: Licentiate, Associate and Experienced Practitioner.
- You have to keep a log book of work done, skills developed and your professional development plan.
- You must complete a written report on this experience to be assessed by the RTPI.
- As an RTPI member you are required to undertake 50 hours of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) every two years.

Getting On

- Assistant planners can move to senior planner after 3 to 5 years' experience. Progression may be quicker once you get Chartered status.
- You might move into consultancy work within the private sector.
- There are also opportunities to work overseas, particularly if you can speak a foreign language.

More Information

For more information please see organisation below:

- [Construction Industry Training Board](#) (CITB)

Contacts

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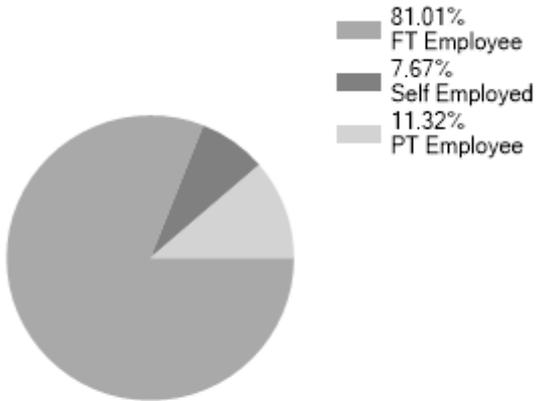
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.