

## Body Piercer

Body piercers use needles to make puncture holes or incisions to the skin on different parts of their client's body. They then insert metal, acrylic or glass jewellery as a decoration. The most common part to pierce is the ear lobe, but body piercers also pierce ear cartilage, noses, eyebrows, lips, tongues and other body parts.

### The Work

You could be:

- discussing the particular type of piercing wanted with the client: for example the risks involved in piercing cartilage, or in piercing parts of the mouth
- getting the client to show ID and to fill in a consent form covering health problems
- advising on types of metals, for example non-toxic metals like surgical steel, 14 carat gold, titanium or zircon
- sterilising the piece of jewellery using an autoclave and cleaning the body part with germicidal soap
- removing a new hollow cannula needle from the packaging and puncturing the skin and, if necessary, the cartilage
- alternatively, using a piercing gun, this is usually only for earlobes
- inserting a piece of jewellery as wide as the needle into the piercing
- carefully disposing of the needle in a special container
- showing the client how to help the piercing heal correctly and what to do if there is a problem.

Some body piercers also offer a tattoo service (see job article [Tattooist](#)).

### Pay

Actual income varies widely, depending on:

- where you work
- the amount of competition in the area
- the hours you work.

As a self-employed body piercer you usually charge a set fee per piercing. Prices range from about £20 to about £60 depending on which body part you work on. Any jewellery you provide will cost the client extra.

### Conditions

- You work in a studio or shop which might be part of a tattoo studio or beauty salon.
- You wear latex gloves and keep your equipment in sterile conditions.
- You might have to work weekends and some evenings.
- It is recommended you are immunised against Hepatitis B.
- You may have to pay to take out public liability insurance if you have your own business.

### Getting In

- You do not need formal qualifications. The most common way in is by doing a traineeship lasting from one to three years.
- It can be difficult to find suitable training with a registered body piercer.
- You must learn about health and safety issues such as sterilisation, cross-contamination or the risk to circulatory and nervous systems.
- After your training you might have to agree not to set up within a certain distance of the studio where you learned the trade.
- Some private studios run courses in body piercing lasting a few days, but these do not fully train you.
- You must register yourself and premises with the local authority in order to be licensed. They will carry out regular inspections of your premises and equipment.
- You must also comply with any local byelaws relating to hygiene, health and safety.

There are jobs in body piercing studios, tattoo studios, shops and beauty therapy salons. Look for jobs offering training on the [Find a Job service](#) on GOV.UK or in Jobcentre Plus offices. You might have to move to another town or city. Many registered body piercers are self-employed.

## What Does It Take

You need:

- good hand to eye co-ordination
- a good awareness of health and safety issues
- very high hygiene standards
- a responsible attitude – to turn away a client who appears underage or who has doubts
- good communication skills
- a calm, reassuring approach – for clients who are nervous or in pain
- good business skills
- care and attention to detail.

## Training

- Training with a registered body piercer lasts 1-3 years.
- Check that any courses you are considering are recognised by the industry.
- During your training you might get a salary or you may only get travelling expenses.

## Getting On

- Success will depend on the location of your studio and the reputation you build up by word of mouth.
- For full recognition you should register with an appropriate professional body, such as the UK Association of Professional Piercers.

In Scotland you can apply for the Tattoo, piercing and electrolysis licence (Scotland) from your local authority. This licence covers:

- tattooing

- semi-permanent skin colouring
- cosmetic piercing
- electrolysis
- acupuncture.

## More Information

Young people under 16 can only have body piercing if they have a parent with them who will give their written consent to the piercing. However, some piercing studios have higher age restrictions depending on the area of the body being pierced.

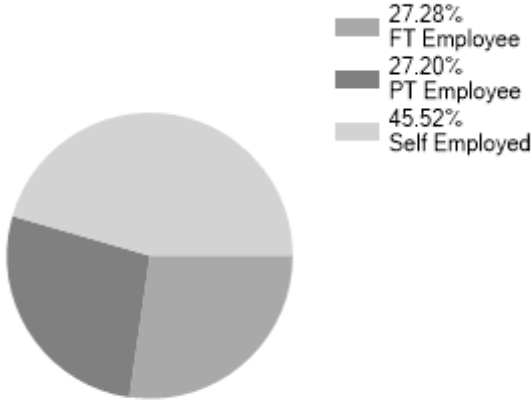
## Contacts

### **UK Association of Professional Piercers (UKAPP)**

Website: [www.ukapp.org.uk](http://www.ukapp.org.uk)

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

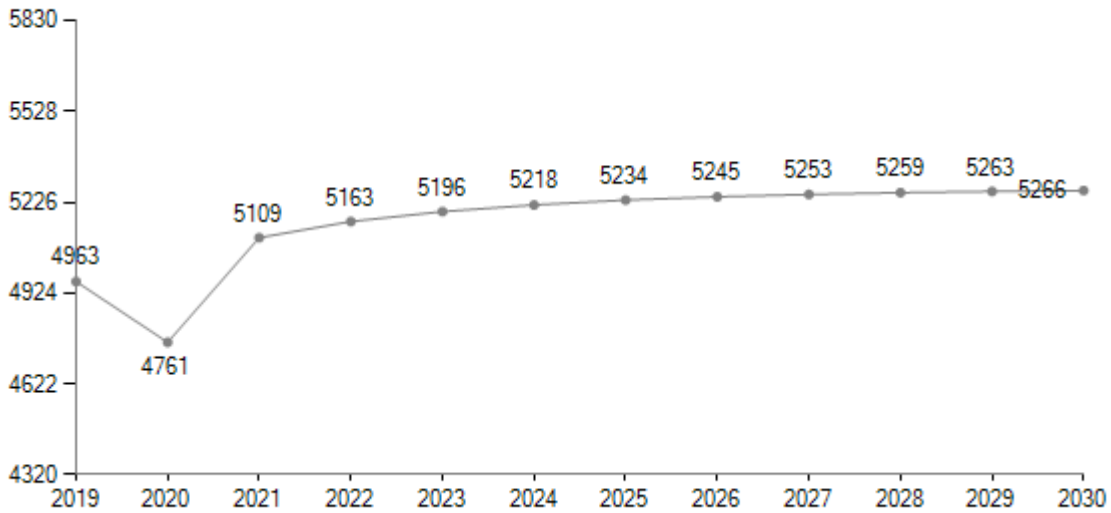


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)