

Pre-press Operator

A pre-press operator uses a computer to get text and graphics ready for printing. They are involved in designing and laying out the artwork, setting out text and adding digital images.

The Work

You could be:

- laying out artwork, text and images according to a design plan
- using desktop publishing software, such as Adobe InDesign and Illustrator, to help lay out pages
- digitally scanning images and adding them to the page or document
- retouching colour and ensuring overall accuracy of the document
- creating sample proofs and sending them to customers
- preparing and checking film or digital outputs
- getting the item ready for the printing process
- transferring images from film onto printing plates (known as platemaking), sometimes using computer controlled equipment.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual salaries may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for and whether you are self-employed
- the demand for the job.

Starting pay for a trainee might be around £18,000 a year. With 1 or 2 years' experience after qualifying you may earn around £20,000 to £25,000. Skilled pre-press operators can earn up to around £30,000 a year.

Conditions

- You will probably work in an office, studio or print shop.
- You will spend a lot of time working on a computer.
- You may need to wear protective clothing to work with some types of equipment.
- You will normally have to work to tight deadlines, so the work can be stressful.
- You might work shifts, including evenings and weekends, to meet deadlines.

Getting In

- A good general education is useful. Many employers look for a group of subjects at National 4 or 5. English, Maths, Art and Design and Graphic Communication are all very useful.
- You may be able to get in by doing a Modern Apprenticeship, working towards SVQs.
- The City of Glasgow College offers a full time course at HND (SCQF Level 8) in Creative Printmaking. For entry you require a relevant HNC (SCQF Level 7).

- Some experience of using desktop publishing software would be an advantage.

What Does It Take

You should have:

- good communication skills
- good IT skills
- creativity and an eye for colour and design
- the ability to work under pressure
- good teamwork skills
- the ability to concentrate for long periods
- excellent attention to detail.

Training

- You train on the job and off the job, usually doing block release study at college. This usually takes between three to four years.
- You might work towards the SVQ Pre-Press (Digital Print pathway) at SCQF Level 6.

Getting On

- You could work for a printing company, design company or a specialist pre-press production company. You might even become self-employed.
- If you work in a small company you may have to move to get promotion. You might move into pre-press management or print administration.

Contacts

British Printing Industries Federation (BPIF)

Tel: 01676 526 030

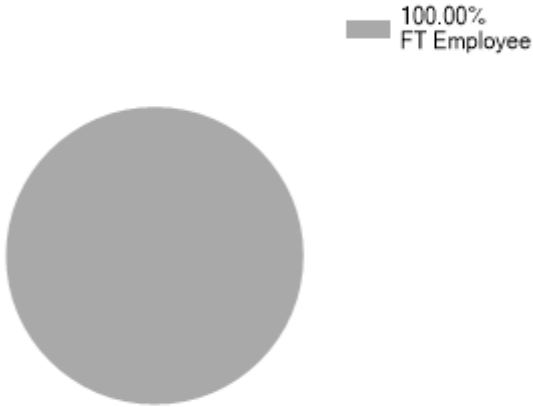
Email: hello@bpif.org.uk

Website: www.britishprint.com

X: @BPIF

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

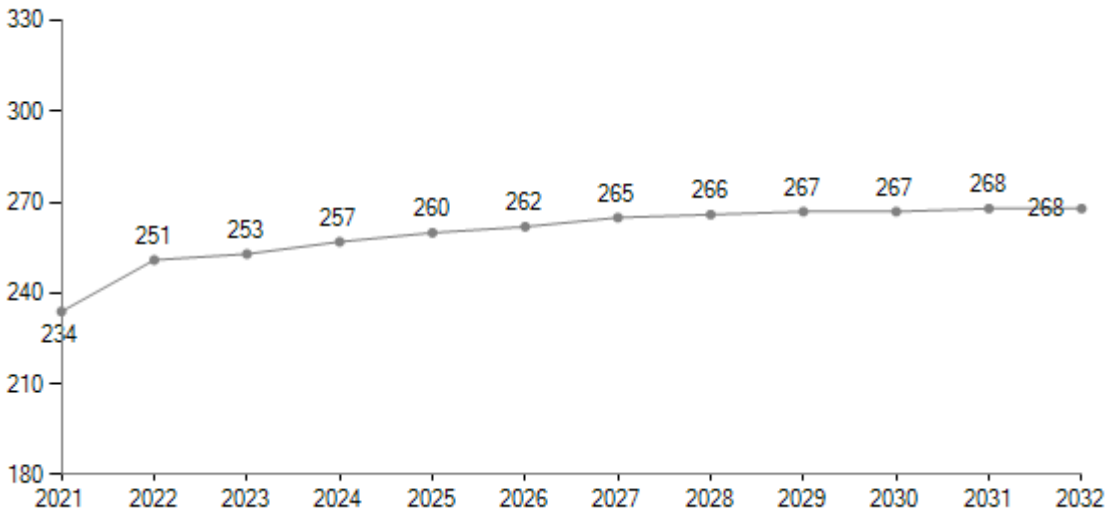


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)