

Government Intelligence Officer or Analyst

Government intelligence officers or analysts work for the Security Service (MI5), the Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) and GCHQ (Government Communications Headquarters). They gather and analyse data from different sources (called intelligence), which is used to help protect the safety and security of the UK.

The Work

Depending on your specific role and which agency you work for, you could be:

- working in a specialist unit such as international counter terrorism, digital intelligence, cyber security, counter espionage or overseas conflict
- working with other government agencies to identify what intelligence is required
- running checks on irregular data
- using IT analysis tools to evaluate data and collate intelligence
- delivering intelligence in written or verbal format to other officers and agencies
- setting up surveillance operations on suspect individuals or groups
- briefing mobile surveillance officers out in the field
- updating other agencies and the police on intelligence gathered and how to move forward with investigations
- analysing data and using intelligence to identify new threats.

Pay

Starting salaries are usually around £33,000 to £40,000. This rises to around £45,000 with first promotion and more with a number of years experience.

A recent vacancy for MI5 showed starting salary at £39,152 a year, rising to £42,326 after the first year.

A recent vacancy for MI6 showed the salary range £35,500 to £45,000 a year.

Conditions

- You would usually work office hours, but may need to work at evenings and weekends if involved in an operation or investigation.
- MI5 headquarters are in London, with regional offices and an office in Northern Ireland.
- MI6 headquarters are in London, but they have people stationed all over the world and you would need to live and work overseas at some point in your career.
- GCHQ have offices in Cheltenham, Bude, Harrogate, Scarborough and Manchester.

Getting In

- You must be a British citizen and one of your parents must be a British citizen or have substantial ties with the UK (as set out by each agency). You must have been resident in Britain for the majority of the 10 years before you apply.

- With MI5 you can apply for either the Intelligence Officer or Intelligence and Data Analyst Development Programme. MI6 employ intelligence officers and GCHQ employ intelligence analysts.
- For posts with MI5 and GCQH you must be at least 18 years of age and have at least a 2:2 degree (SCQF Level 9) in any subject (sometimes a 2:1 for MI5 - job adverts would give details). For MI5, equivalent full time work experience may be acceptable.
- For posts with MI6 you must be at least 21 years of age, have at least a 2:2 degree in any subject and be able to demonstrate an interest in foreign culture.
- The application process can take 6-9 months and involves a number of stages, including a pre-screening, initial application, online tests, competency questionnaires, assessment centres and interviews. See each agency's website for specific details.
- Due to the sensitive and confidential nature of the work, you must undergo strict security checks.
- For some posts you have to pass medical tests and sometimes drug screening.
- For roles in MI6, ability in foreign languages and technology are both advantages.

What Does It Take

You should have:

- honesty and integrity
- a good eye for detail
- excellent written and verbal communication skills
- strong problem solving skills
- the ability to work with large amounts of complex data
- excellent analytical skills
- sound judgement
- IT and numeracy skills.

You need to be:

- interested in current world affairs
- quick thinking and decisive
- well organised and able to handle a varied workload
- able to work under pressure and to deadlines
- able to work as part of a team or on your own
- willing to keep knowledge and skills up to date
- very discreet.

Training

- You will undergo induction training to learn about the agency and its role, security, health and safety, IT systems and legal frameworks.
- Training will also be on the job.
- With the MI5 Development Programmes, you follow structured training over two years.

Getting On

- You will be offered the opportunity to develop skills through internal and external training opportunities.
- Within MI5, after two years and successful completion of assessments and reviews, you will advance to the Foundation Investigative Training course after which you will be eligible for promotion.
- You might move into a senior management role.

More Information

Have a look at the quiz [Where Do Your Skills Lie?](#) on the MI5 website. Test your skills to see if you would suit an investigative role.

Contacts

Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ)

Tel: +44 1242 221491

Website: www.gchq.gov.uk

X: @GCHQ

Secret Intelligence Service MI6

Website: www.sis.gov.uk

Security Service MI5

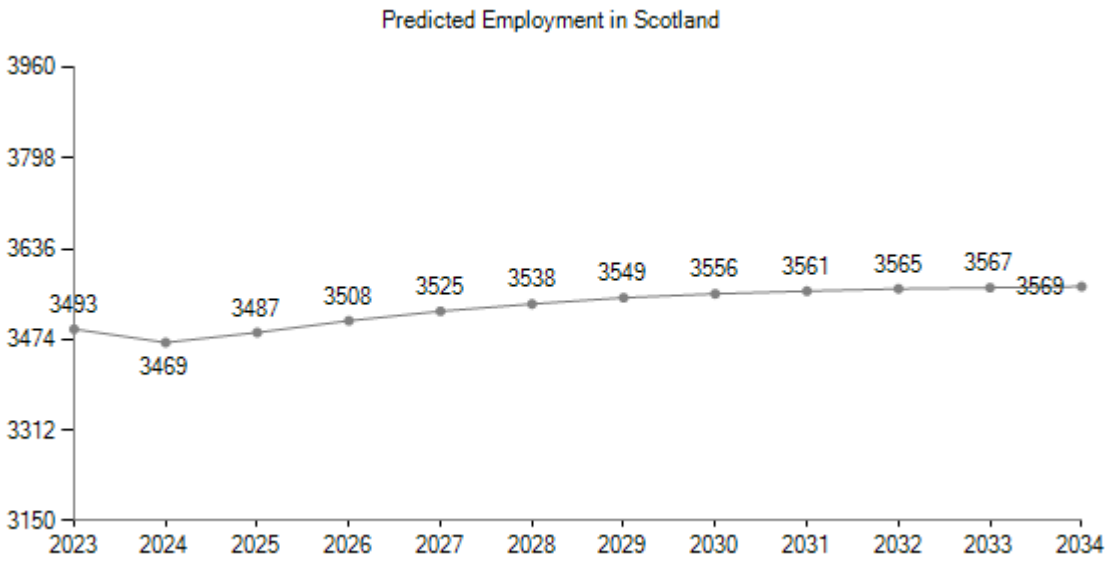
Website: www.mi5.gov.uk

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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