

Software Tester

A software tester carries out manual and automated tests on software at the quality assurance stage of software development. They identify bugs and issues and ensure that software is fit for purpose before it is released to the end users. Other job titles include test analyst and quality assurance (QA) tester.

The Work

You could be:

- working with software developers to get an understanding of what the system is meant to do, its functionality and who the end users are
- breaking down complex or large systems into smaller parts to test
- developing and executing test scripts and detailed test cases
- performing manual testing for some cases
- using specialist software to carry out automated testing where possible
- carrying out a range of different types of test, including functional, stress, performance and scalability
- reporting progress, risks and bugs identified to the software development and project management teams
- testing in different platforms including operating systems, browsers and mobile devices.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Pay rates vary widely, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

The starting salary can be in the range of £18,000 to £25,000 a year. With experience, this can rise to between £30,000 and £40,000 a year. Senior or lead software testers can earn up to around £65,000 a year, sometimes more.

If you work freelance, your income will vary, depending on the contracts you get.

Conditions

- You will generally work normal office hours from Monday to Friday, but might sometimes have to work weekends or evenings to meet deadlines.
- You spend most of your time working at a computer.
- The work can be stressful at times.

Getting In

- Entrants usually have a degree (SCQF Levels 9-11) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in a computing or IT subject such as software development, software engineering or computing science.

- If you have a degree in a non-computing subject you could take a postgraduate (SCQF Level 11) course in a related subject.
- For entry to an HND course you normally require 1-2 Highers plus some subjects at National 5. For entry to a degree course you need 4-5 Highers.
- You might get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in IT and Telecommunications or Digital Applications at SCQF Level 6, then work your way up with experience and further specialist training, or a Technical Apprenticeship at SCQF Level 8.
- Studying for a relevant Foundation Apprenticeship while in fifth and sixth year at school could count towards entry of a course or apprenticeship. Entry requirements vary between colleges, but you usually require some subjects at National 5 including English and Maths.
- You may need to do a technical test as part of a job interview.
- Knowledge of programming languages, such as Java and C#, databases and SQL is useful and maybe necessary.

There are jobs in almost all industries, including retail, IT, education, the media, central and local government, finance, the telecommunications industry and health care. Jobs are advertised in the press and on the internet.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- excellent attention to detail
- an analytical and logical approach to your work
- knowledge of programming languages
- good written and verbal communication skills
- strong problem solving skills
- an interest in technology and IT.

You need to be able to:

- work accurately under pressure and meet tight deadlines
- work well as part of a team and individually
- organise your workload and adapt to changes in timescales
- learn to use new software quickly.

Training

- Training can be on the job with part time study.
- With a Modern Apprenticeship you would work towards the Diploma for Information Technology and Telecommunications Professionals at SCQF Level 6 or Diploma in Digital Application Support at SCQF Level 6.
- You would usually complete other short courses whilst working, for example in specialist testing software and programming languages.
- You can work towards professional qualifications, ranging from foundation level up to expert, in software testing through the [International Software Testing Qualifications Board](#) (ISTQB).

Getting On

- With experience, you might become a team manager, overseeing a number of other testers.
- You might move into a more business-facing role, such as business analysis or project management.
- You might move into software development (see the [Web Developer](#) and [Software Engineer](#) job profiles).
- You could work freelance or do contract work (usually jobs lasting for a few months at a time).

More Information

If you are considering a career in IT, take a look at the [Tech Future Careers](#) website. You will find the video case studies of workers and general information on the industry useful.

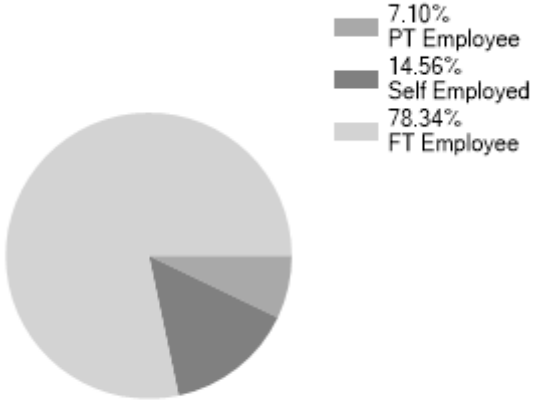
For more information please see the organisations listed below:

- [BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT](#)
- [UK Testing Board](#)

Contacts

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

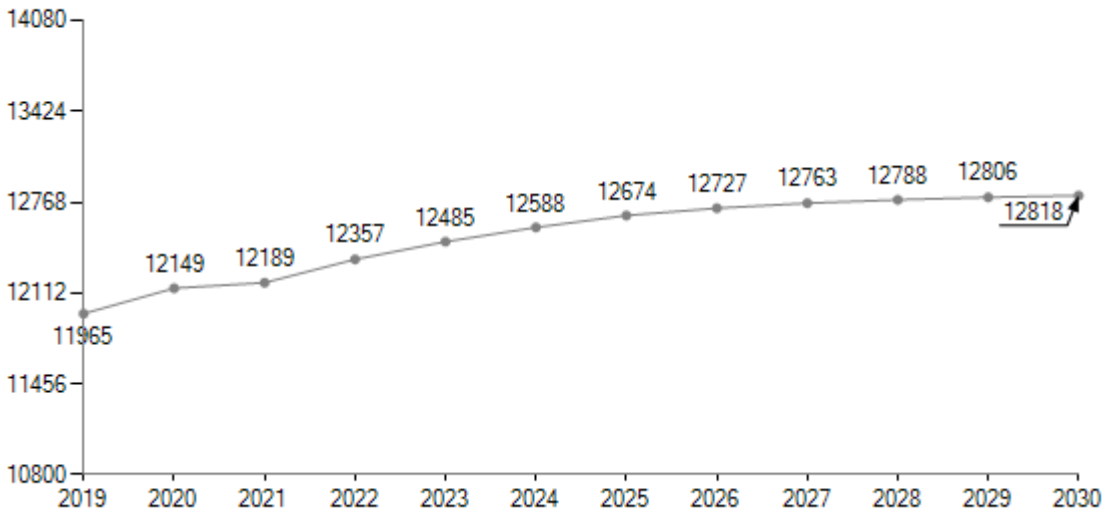


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)