

IT, Digital & Telecoms



THERE IS A TOTAL
IT & TELECOMS
WORKFORCE OF
1.5 MILLION
PEOPLE

105,000
BUSINESSES IN THE UK
OFFER IT & TELECOMS
PRODUCTS & SERVICES

IT ACCOUNTS FOR
4%
OF THE UK
WORKFORCE

Can you remember life before the Internet? Boring wasn't it? Almost everybody in the world is linked by the World Wide Web and most jobs require some form of IT competence. From online advertising to providing technical support for businesses, IT is required in pretty much all sectors in some shape or form, so it's a good industry to work in!

You ask us...

WHAT'S THE IT, DIGITAL & TELECOMS SECTOR ALL ABOUT?

Funnily enough, it's all about computers and their various roles in society. From fixing hardware problems to designing new ways to combat viruses, it's a varied sector that carries great importance; some companies depend entirely on their IT network so it's vital to keep up to date with the latest technology and programming to make sure you can perform in an ever changing environment.

WHAT KIND OF SALARY CAN I EXPECT TO EARN?

The average IT professional earns **£38,500** a year, so you can expect to earn good money in this sector. As companies move into a more digital age, there is a greater demand for qualified IT specialists. Starting salaries are between **£16,000** and **£20,000** depending on which career path you go down.

WHAT KIND OF ENVIRONMENT WOULD I BE WORKING IN?

It'll come as no surprise that you will be working in front of a lot of computer screens! Depending on your job role, you could be working in a school, an office or even from your own front room! You will have to have good interpersonal skills as computer problems stress people out and you'll be encountering a lot of stressed people!

HOW DOES THIS SECTOR COMPARE TO OTHERS ACROSS THE COUNTRY?

The IT, Digital and Telecoms industry employs over **1.5 million** people and out of those there are **674,000** working in IT in other industries. This sector will require **500,000** new entrants in the next five years, so there's no better time to get into IT!

WHERE IS THE WORK MOST CONCENTRATED?

This is one of the few sectors that actually get more concentrated as you head north. This might sound strange, but Sheffield, Leeds and Rotherham actually have the highest proportion of IT and Telecoms employment in the UK! As you can imagine, most work in IT is located in the larger towns and cities, but every company uses IT, so you won't be hard pressed to find vacancies!



Careers Choices

Well, there isn't a bigger sector at the minute than IT. We all need it installing, maintaining and upgrading and you could be the one to do it! Most other professions require you to have at least basic IT knowledge, so it's a valuable skill to have if you wish to branch out in your career. Here are some of the job roles you might encounter in this sector.

WEB DESIGNER

Every web page you visit on the Internet is the product of the creative process a web designer goes through. You'll need an eye for detail as the page will have to be attractive, user friendly and functional in order to be a success. A lot of web designers work for themselves, but if you are working for a company, you will be heading up a team of programmers and specialists. Starting salaries are between **£16,000** and **£20,000**.

SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

Software developers are responsible for designing programmes and applications for people to use. These range from simple programs like Word Processors and Web Browsers to more complex stuff like computer games and social media sites. It's a technical role that requires a lot of knowledge and detail, but the starting salary reflects this and is between **£20,000** and **£26,000**.

IT TRAINER

If you wish to pass on the knowledge that you have learned, then you could set up your own teaching system to help people of all ability levels get to grips with IT. You could be teaching people anything from basic word processing and spreadsheet use to more technical stuff like networking computer systems and hardware installation. Starting salaries are usually around **£18,000**.

HELPDESK ASSISTANT

This is for people who have good inter-personal skills as well as a solid understanding of IT. You'll be handling a range of different problems and will require knowledge about both hardware and software to cover all possible problems that might arise. Good customer service is also essential here. You can expect to earn **£14,000** to **£16,000** as a starting salary.

TELECOMS TECHNICIAN

Telecoms cover things like broadband, TV and Satellite, mobile phones and radio. It's a varied occupation in which you'll have to specialise. You could be installing satellite television in somebody's home, or installing internet for a large international corporation! Starting salaries are usually between **£14,000** and **£16,000**.

Where to begin

APPRENTICESHIPS

If you are over 16 you could enter an Apprenticeship, which would teach you the skills you need while you work and earn a salary. You'll spend half your time in the classroom and half out on the job. Below are the Apprenticeship frameworks for this sector, which when completed will give you a Level 2 qualification in the form of a BTEC, Diploma or NVQ:

IT Applications Specialist
• IT Software, Web and Telecoms Professionals

ADVANCED APPRENTICESHIPS

These are the equivalent to A-Levels and can usually be joined after completing the associated Intermediate Apprenticeship. They are ideal for people who want a practical role as they learn while gaining valuable employment experience. People with Advanced Apprenticeships tend to progress up the ladder a lot quicker than those without, as the skills they learn are more suited to management and supervisory roles. Here are some of the Apprenticeship Frameworks for this sector and all of these will result in a Level 3 qualification such as a BTEC, a Diploma or an NVQ.

IT Applications Specialist
• IT Software, Web and Telecoms Professionals

A-LEVELS

A-Levels are the most popular gateway into university and are sought after by employers.

Here are some of the relevant A-Levels for this sector:

Computing • Design and Technology: Systems and Control • ICT

FOUNDATION DEGREES

A Foundation Degree combines university lifestyle with practical, hands on work. It's sort of like a cross between an Apprenticeship and an Honours Degree. They are often used as gateway qualifications to a full time Degree as they count towards the first two years of an Honours Degree. They usually take two years to complete and you'll be both in the work place and on the university campus. You can study a foundation degree in **Information Technology**.

COLLEGE COURSES

A college course is another way to get into this sector. For more information, check out www.careersworld.co.uk.
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