

Plain Guide to Administration and Customer Service

Most companies and public sector organisations employ clerical and administrative staff. Jobs include collecting and processing information and data and dealing with queries from colleagues, clients or members of the public. Admin staff can specialise in areas like law, finance or health. Some organisations have their own call or contact centres to deal with customer enquiries, or sales and marketing. Others outsource this work to specialist contact centres.

Where are the jobs:

- Local authorities, government departments
- Manufacturers and all types of business organisations
- Banks, insurance, financial services, law firms
- Retailers, mail order and online shopping companies
- Hospitals, health centres etc
- Schools, colleges, universities
- Contact centres, telesales and market research companies

In Yorkshire and the Humber there were 247,274 administration employees and 57,910 customer service employees in 2013 - almost 14% of all jobs in the region. (Annual Population Survey 2013)

11%
of all UK
employment
is in business
administration

35% of
employees in
these sectors
work part-
time

77% of
employees
in business
administration
are female

Typical job titles include:

Administrative assistant
Administrator
Accounts/sales clerk
Call handler

Clerical assistant
Contact/call centre agent
Customer service adviser
Legal secretary

Medical secretary
Office manager
Personal assistant (PA)
Receptionist

Pay

Accounts clerk	£14,449-£39,520
Administrative assistant/administrator	£13,129-£30,846
Customer service advisor	£12,407-£20,770+
Customer service supervisor	£17,730-£38,027
Legal secretary	£14,573-£25,058+
Receptionist	£11,929-£23,326
Secretary	£16,095-£38,532

Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2013



Vacancies advertised online in 2014 (Yorkshire and the Humber)



Top 5	Number of postings
General administrative occupations	15,497
Customer service occupations	7,151
Accounts clerks, bookkeepers etc	5,473
Receptionists	2,339
Sales administrators	2,075
Total vacancies in these sectors	51,510

The largest number of vacancies in 2014 was in Leeds, followed by Sheffield, North Yorkshire, Bradford and Wakefield

Source: Labour Insight, Burning Glass Technologies 2015

Top employers in Yorkshire and the Humber 2014-2015

Employer	Industry	Job postings
National Health Service	1,656	Health
Asda	279	Supermarkets
CRA Consulting	252	Agency
North Yorkshire County Council	199	Local authority
Rentalcars.com	171	Vehicle hire
Sue Ross Legal	127	Agency
University of Leeds	112	Education
Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council	108	Local authority
Bagnall Hopkins	107	Agency
Carphone Warehouse Group	102	Telecoms
Provident Financial	101	Financial services
Ladbrokes	99	Bookmakers
William Hill	98	Bookmakers
Royal Bank of Scotland	97	Bank
Brewster	87	Agency
Big Fish Little Fish Ltd	84	Agency
University of Sheffield	74	Education
RBS International	70	Bank
Provident Personal Credit Ltd	69	Financial services
Type Agency	61	Agency

Source: Labour Insight, Burning Glass Technologies 2015. Based on vacancies posted online, and including agencies which tend not to disclose the employers they recruit for.

Education and training

74% of business administration workers have at least a level 2 qualification, and 24% have level 4 or above. Skills and qualifications in IT are valuable, and most jobs require a good knowledge of text processing, databases and spreadsheets.

Most colleges offer courses in business, administration and IT. Online courses are available through www.learndirect.co.uk

Contact centre employers tend to prefer GCSEs in maths and English. 77% of contact centre employees have a qualification at level 2 or above.

Training for contact centre work is mostly in the workplace.

Current trends

- There has been a decline in numbers of staff due to more advanced IT systems and more managers and professional staff doing their own administration.
- There have also been substantial job cuts in local and central government and in the private sector due to the recession. In the region, 22,500 jobs were lost since 2009. However, there has been a trend of rising numbers since 2013.
- Employers often ask for skills in Microsoft Powerpoint and/or Project, shorthand and minute-taking.
- The trend is for larger call centre businesses handling calls for many different clients, for example Capita in Leeds has three bases serving a range of organisations.
- Advisers need a high level of technical IT skills, and the use of social media is on the increase.

Future trends

It is forecast that the number of people working in administration occupations in Yorkshire and the Humber will fall by 33,000 between 2012 and 2022. However replacement demand due to retirements and other movement will be high, so the total number of vacancies is forecast to be 109,000, or 10,900 each year.

The trend is towards encouraging customers to use the self-service options of looking for information on a website, or email, text or interactive voice response systems to make routine enquiries or shop. This will reduce the number of staff needed. Those that remain will be likely to be dealing with more difficult or complex enquiries.

More information...

CfA (Council for Administration)
www.cfa.uk.com

Contact Centre Association
www.cca.org.uk

International Customer Management Institute
www.callcentre.co.uk

National Careers Service
<https://nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk>
See 'job profiles' for information on jobs in administration and customer service

Skills and personal qualities

- Communication, both verbal and in writing
- English
- Maths
- IT, especially Microsoft Office, Word, Excel, Powerpoint and Project
- Organisation and planning
- Politeness, patience and helpfulness
- Ability to work quickly and accurately under pressure
- Confident on the telephone
- Problem solving
- Able to work independently and as part of a team

Where to look for vacancies...

- Local, regional and national papers
- Online recruitment websites
- Jobcentre Plus:
<http://www.gov.uk/jobsearch>
- Employment agencies: search www.yell.com for 'recruitment consultants'
- Companies' and organisations' own websites
- Local government: www.lgjobs.com; NHS www.jobs.nhs.uk



Further help...

National Careers Service advisers are available in your local area to provide information, advice and guidance on learning and work. See the website or call 0800 100 900.

