

CAREER OF THE WEEK: Payroll Assistant

What does a payroll assistant do?

A payroll assistant helps make sure that employees are paid correctly and on time. They prepare and check payslips, calculate wages, process holiday pay, overtime and bonuses, and make the necessary tax and National Insurance deductions. Payroll assistants keep accurate records, deal with confidential information, and often answer questions from staff about their pay. They work closely with payroll managers, accountants, and HR teams, and need to be confident with numbers, deadlines, and detail.



What can I expect to earn as a payroll assistant?

Starting salaries for payroll assistants are usually between £18,000 and £22,000 a year, depending on location and employer. With experience, this can rise to £25,000–£28,000, and senior payroll officers or team leaders can earn £30,000 or more. Many employers also offer benefits such as pension contributions, paid holidays, and staff discounts.

What subjects should I study to become a payroll assistant?

At school or college, it's helpful to study maths, business studies, IT/computing, or accounting and finance. Strong literacy skills are important too, so English is valuable. Being comfortable with spreadsheets, databases, and payroll software will give you a head start, so any courses that build your computer skills are useful.

How can I start my career as a payroll assistant?

There's no single route into payroll, but most people start in finance or administrative roles and work their way up. You could:

Apply for an entry-level payroll or accounts assistant job and learn on the job.

Take a payroll qualification, such as those offered by the Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals (CIPP).

Complete an apprenticeship in payroll administration, which combines work with study, or study a relevant college course.

Gain office experience through temporary work, volunteering, or part-time jobs to build your skills with numbers, organisation, and confidentiality.

With experience, you could progress to payroll officer, payroll manager, or move into other areas of finance or HR. Payroll assistants play a vital role in every business – after all, everyone likes getting paid correctly and on time!

To research local education and training opportunities that could lead to a career as a payroll assistant, visit our partner website www.logonmoveon.co.uk

Other useful websites to find out more about a career as a payroll assistant:

The Chartered Institute of Payroll Professionals, Payroll Career Resources <https://www.cipp.org.uk/payroll-careers/career-resources.html>

National Careers Service, Payroll Administrator

<https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-profiles/payroll-administrator>

