

JOB PROFILE: TRANSPORT PLANNER

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Planning ahead is important. Transport planners design plans and manage projects related to transport systems and schemes, both locally and nationally.

They deal with many different projects and can work for local or national government, development agencies, transport companies or specialist consultancies.

Transport planning work can involve:-

- developing schemes for new transport infrastructures
- solving transport and/or safety problems and assessing potential solutions
- gathering, analysing and interpreting data
- forecasting effects of new schemes and changes to current systems
- investigating infrastructure solutions and interventions
- writing reports and presenting findings

They also have to be aware of current issues, such as health and safety, social inclusion and environmental issues as these can impact on planning activities and project objectives.

Transport planners also work to encourage the use of alternative methods of transport instead of private vehicles.

Most work is office-based, though planners can also spend time visiting sites, so they can assess current transport and traffic situations or evaluate the impact of their plans on the surrounding area. They may also have to attend evening meetings where they can present their plans and gauge opinion.

QUALITIES & SKILLS

To be a transport planner you need:-

- Problem-solving and analytical skills
- Project management skills including the ability to work on more than one project at a time
- Confident communication skills including report writing and presentation skills
- IT skills for computer modelling and simulation packages
- Creativity for design activities
- Ability to draw up and manage large schemes and plans
- Understanding of transport issues

ENTRY

Transport planners are normally recruited after they have gained a degree, or sometimes a postgraduate qualification.

Relevant subjects include geography, civil engineering, town or transport planning and environmental science. Other subjects such as maths, social science or business can also be acceptable.

Some organisations may employ transport planning assistants who do not have degrees, but who have

studied for other qualifications in these areas, such as BTECs or foundation courses.

Currently there are around 12000 transport planners in the UK at the moment, however there is a need for some 600 to 900 new planners every year, so prospects of entry, if you can meet the standards expected of you, are good.

TRAINING

Continual professional development is encouraged and there are specific postgraduate qualifications in transport planning available as well as specialised short courses relevant to your work.

Transport planners can also work towards accredited membership of several professional institutes:-

- the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport
- the Institution of Civil Engineers
- the Institution of Highways and Transportation
- the Royal Town Planning Institute

The Transport Planning Society also runs a skills initiative encouraging development of skills for potential entrants and existing employees of the industry.

PROGRESSION & SALARY

Transport planners can earn up to £20000 in their first few years of employment. This can rise up to around £50000 for experienced planners. Top consultants can earn more than this depending on the contracts they have.

Once they have started, transport planners can progress to become senior planners or independent consultants, or they can move into

areas such as policy development or traffic engineering.

FIND OUT MORE...

For further information and advice visit:

Transport Planning Society

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