June 2026

Early and Non-Early Career Roles Advertised on SpaceCareers.uk between 2023-2025

Foreword: Chair of the Space Skills Advisory Panel

The Space Skills Advisory Panel (SSAP) brings together industry, academia and government to address skills opportunities and challenges across the UK space sector. To inform the SSAP, the Space Partnership is developing a skills dashboard to bring all available information and data relevant to the UK space sector into one place, on:

- Education (sourced from the government and the devolved administrations);
- Estimated number of people with space-relevant qualifications
- Current UK space workforce (Size & Health, Skills Survey and Space Census).

The Space Partnership team commissioned SpaceCareers.uk to produce a report on early-career roles, as there are no publicly available datasets to inform the dashboard. SpaceCareers.uk collates a significant proportion of the available early-career roles across the UK space sector. On behalf of the SSAP, I would like to thank the Space Partnership team and SpaceCareers.uk for this contribution.

Although the information carries uncertainties and is open to interpretation, it provides useful insight from which to build. Skills shortages are one of the most commonly cited barriers to growth. The report highlights that there are around 300 new early-career space roles per year. While this figure is expected to be of the correct order of magnitude, it represents the roles visible through SpaceCareers.uk rather than a complete census of sector hiring. The ~300 figure may not capture all opportunities, particularly where wider apprenticeship or graduate schemes within aerospace or defence organisations include a space-related placement as part of a multi-year programme.

The reported figures should therefore be viewed as conservative, with the true number of early-career opportunities across the sector likely to be higher, particularly given the size of the workforce. The consistently high demand for early-career positions across the UK space sector shows that the number of positions currently offered is far lower than the number of people at the start of their career looking for roles.

It is worth highlighting the subtle distinction within 'early-career' roles, which the report defines as applicants with up to 3 years' experience. This group includes both individuals entering directly from school or university ('entry-level') and those who have 1-2 years of workplace experience. The latter are generally perceived to present a lower risk to recruiting firms than candidates entering the workforce for the first time.

There are excellent early-career programmes in the sector, and I encourage UK space organisations to continue to expand their intake of apprentices, graduates and early-career staff. This report is welcomed by the SSAP as an important contribution to build better understanding where intervention is needed to support a substantial and sustainable increase in the workforce that will underpin future growth.

Ben Stern, Chair
Space Skills Advisory Panel

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Executive Summary

This report was commissioned by Space Partnership to provide data and insights for the Space Skills Advisory Panel. We analyse the early career and non-early career roles listed on SpaceCareers.uk between 2023 and 2025, finding the number of early career roles to be steady around 300 per year, while the number of non-early career roles grew from 330 in 2023 to 501 in 2025. This is a subset of the total roles hired for during the period, which we estimate to be between 7,000 and 12,000 depending on year and estimation method.

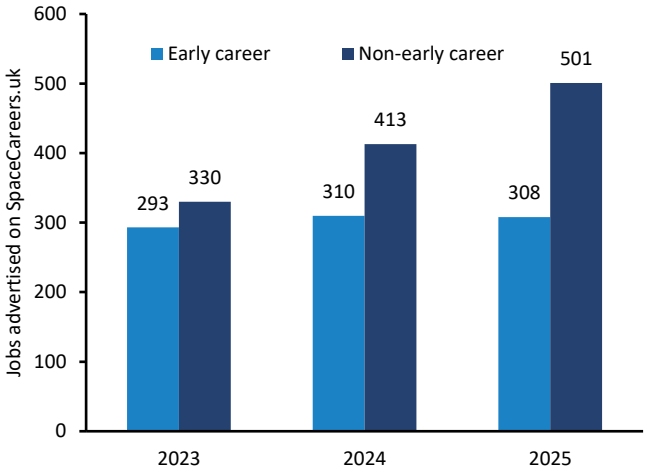
Data and scope

The SpaceCareers.uk jobs board has been operating since 2015 and advertises space-related roles in the UK. Adverts are free to list and are either uploaded by the hiring organisations themselves or by the SpaceCareers.uk team. Initially limited to early career roles, in 2022 SpaceCareers.uk began advertising roles for all experience levels, including lead, senior and executive roles.

Early career roles are defined in this report as roles that require three or fewer years of relevant experience. Where required years of experience are not specified, other aspects are considered such as salary, job title, and breadth of requirements. Internships, work experience, volunteering and PhD positions were not included, and only jobs situated in the UK were considered. Adverts for 2,692 roles were uploaded to SpaceCareers.uk between 2023 and 2025 inclusive. 2,156 roles were deemed in-scope and categorised using the criteria above.

Analysis

Over the three years, there were 912 early-career roles and 1,244 non-early career roles advertised. The number of early career roles advertised stayed steady at around 300, which is consistent with 2017-2022 data not published here. The number of non-early career roles grew from 330 in 2023 to 501 in 2025 due to SpaceCareers.uk only starting to advertise these roles in 2022. While the total number of non-early career roles is likely to be higher (see below), we believe the number of early career roles to be more representative of the sector as SpaceCareers.uk has advertised these roles since 2015 and has good links with relevant hiring organisations.



The number of early career and non-early career roles posted on SpaceCareers.uk per year.

For early career candidates, there are many more Standard Employment jobs as opposed to Graduate Positions or Apprenticeships which are specifically designed for those with less experience; 81% of early career space roles comprise Standard Employment jobs. Across early career and non-early career roles, use of contractors is not prolific, with contracting roles comprising just 3% of the total.

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It is worth noting that the trends seen in this data may reflect the data collection rather than an underlying trend in the jobs market. For example, the growth in apprenticeships in 2025 was due to the Airbus apprenticeship scheme comprising 23 apprenticeships; previous years may have had more apprenticeships that SpaceCareers.uk did not advertise or split into separate vacancies. Similarly, the growth in internships in 2024 is mostly due to 95 SPINternships posted that year; we did not separately post the 72 internships offered in 2023[1] and only 29 were posted in 2025. These effects are more pronounced for columns with fewer roles.

Early Career roles						
Year	Standard	Graduate Position	Apprenticeship	Contractor	Other	Total
2023	236	29	7	6	15	293
2024	268	17	7	1	18	311
2025	233	23	26	14	12	308
Total	**737**	**69**	**40**	**21**	**45**	**912**

Non-Early Career roles				
Year	Standard	Contractor	Other	Total
2023	313	13	4	**330**
2024	398	13	2	**413**
2025	477	24	0	**501**
Total	**1188**	**50**	**6**	**1244**

Excluded from dataset		
Year	Internship	PhD
2023	33	33
2024	119	31
2025	81	20
Total	**233**	**83**

Tables showing the types of jobs posted on SpaceCareers.uk from 2023-2025. See Appendix for definitions.

SpaceCareers.uk estimates that it advertises for about 10% of all UK space sector vacancies

We use two methods to estimate the number of UK space jobs hired for each year using data from SpaceCareers.uk and the 'Size and Health of the UK Space Industry' (Size and Health) reports.[2] The most recent Size and Health report (2024) covers the financial year 2022/23, so this estimation required extrapolation using the average growth rate from the latest three reports (dated 2022, 2023 and 2024).

Method 1: For each year, we take the number of non-direct-to-home (DTH) broadcast roles from the Size and Health report. We then estimate the number of 'turnover jobs' that are required to maintain this number, using employee turnover rates of 10% and 15%.[3] We then calculate the growth in non-DTH broadcast jobs as 'new jobs' that didn't exist in the previous year, and add them to arrive at an estimate of the total roles hired for during that year.

Method 2: For each year, we take the ratio of space organisations from the corresponding Size and Health report to the number of organisations that advertised on SpaceCareers.uk in that year. We then multiply the number of SpaceCareers.uk roles advertised that year by that ratio. This assumes that the number of jobs per organisation in our sample is representative.

[1] SPIN: Insights and Evolution at https://sa.catapult.org.uk/blogs/spin-insights-and-evolution/
[2] The 2024 Size and Health of the UK Space Industry Report is available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/size-and-health-of-the-uk-space-industry-2024/size-and-health-of-the-uk-space-industry-2024
[3] Employee turnover rates vary largely by industry and are not available for the UK space sector. Make UK estimates the manufacturing industry employee turnover rate to be 10.9% in 2024 and 16.1% in 2023: https://emn.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/labour-turnover-report-2025_0.pdf

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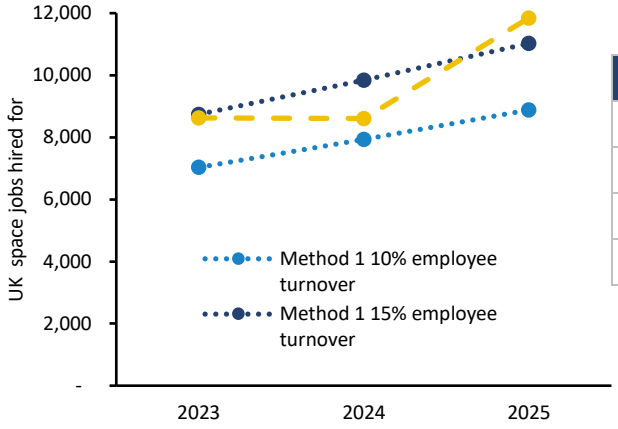
Both methods arrive at similar results, and both have significant uncertainty associated with extrapolating the Size and Health report figures to 2023/4 and 2024/5. Taking the total number of roles (in the scope of this report) advertised on SpaceCareers.uk each year from the table above, and comparing that to the estimated total number of jobs hired for in the sector by each method, indicates that SpaceCareers.uk advertises 7-11% of total UK space sector vacancies.



	2023	2024	2025
Method 1 10%	7,032	7,930	8,882
Method 1 15%	8,741	9,844	11,026
Method 2	8,627	8,607	11,847
Range	**7,000-8,800**	**7,900-9,800**	**8,800-12,000**

Graph and table showing the estimated number of UK space jobs hired for in 2023-2025 using three different methods.

Appendix

Use the filters tool at spacecareers.uk/jobs to see examples of each job type.

Type of role	Definition
Early Career	Roles for individuals with limited professional experience. In this report, we define it as roles that require three or fewer years of relevant experience.
Entry-Level	Early career roles that do not have experience requirements. Due to the variations in entry-level roles, including post-secondary school vs graduate roles, and where companies may still want some experience (e.g. internships), we use the broader term 'Early Career' in this report.
Standard Employment	Roles where the individual is fully employed by the organisation. Most often full time and for an indefinite period, though fixed term standard employment is also used.
Apprenticeship	Structured training programmes where individuals gain qualifications while working in a paid role, often combining college/university and on-the-job learning
Contractor	Fixed term employment conducted by individuals who are often self-employed and do not receive employee benefits.
Graduate position	Structured schemes designed for recent university graduates at the start of their professional careers, often including rotations, mentorship and training
Internship	Short term, usually paid placements for individuals to gain experience in a professional environment. Can be of several weeks duration, or up to a year in a university 'sandwich' industrial placement.
Other	Includes Fellowships (academic and NGO positions), Postdoctorate positions (categorised here as early career), and Freelance (similar to contractor).

Report produced by Ewan Wright & Jacob Smith, Directors, SpaceCareers.uk Ltd.

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