

ACTUARIAL CAREERS IN THE GOVERNMENT ACTUARY'S DEPARTMENT

The logo for the Government Actuary's Department (GAD), consisting of the letters 'GAD' in a white, stylized font on a red square background.

WE ARE RENOWNED FOR THE QUALITY OF OUR ADVICE.
THIS IS BECAUSE WE SELECT ONLY THE MOST PROMISING RECRUITS.

The GAD logo, with 'GAD' in blue and red.

GOVERNMENT **ACTUARY'S** DEPARTMENT

We aim to provide our clients with independent, professional actuarial advice of the highest quality.



WHO WE ARE

The Government Actuary's Department (GAD) has a reputation for providing high-quality, independent advice. We currently employ around 45 qualified actuaries and a similar number of trainee actuaries and support staff. We are based in central London in the heart of the financial community.

GAD was established as an independent government department in 1919. Today, we provide a centralised actuarial consultancy for public sector clients throughout the UK. Our experience in the field of UK occupational pension schemes, pensions policy and regulation, and social security is unrivalled.

Our advice is also increasingly sought by private sector clients and overseas governments. We have a rapidly growing profile and international reputation in the fields of social insurance and insurance supervision.

By far the largest part of our business is the provision of advice to occupational pension schemes. Consequently, most of our trainee recruits are assigned to work with qualified actuaries who are specialists in this field.



WHAT WE DO

Our skills enable clients to formulate national policy, manage public sector finances, and monitor and supervise financial institutions. This work is crucial to the welfare of millions of people both in the UK and overseas. We provide advice on a wide variety of topics in many fields which can be grouped into four main areas:

- Occupational pensions (UK)
- Pensions policy (UK and overseas)
- Insurance supervision (Overseas)
- Social insurance (UK and overseas)

Over 85 years' experience in these areas has given us an unmatched understanding of government and public sector needs, and has seen GAD evolve into an international actuarial consultancy whose expertise is increasingly relevant to private sector needs.

INDEPENDENCE AND INTEGRITY

We aim to provide our clients with independent, professional actuarial advice of the highest quality. We are a not-for-profit organisation but, at the same time, our financial viability depends entirely upon the fees we receive from our clients. We are therefore highly focused on meeting our clients' needs and establishing and maintaining good relationships with them.



'An actuary?

Part statistician, part economist and part financier, with generous helpings of the law, marketing and the art of management thrown in for good measure'

WHO ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

Each year we recruit a small number of people who have clear potential to become fully qualified actuaries and will relish the challenges of our diverse and public interest-orientated work.

At a minimum, candidates should:

- expect to graduate, or have graduated, with a first or high 2:1 honours degree in a subject with high mathematical content or expect to achieve or have achieved an equivalent postgraduate qualification and
- have an A level in mathematics at grade A or above and at least GCSE in English language at grade B or above.

Applicants must be highly numerate, but do not need to be maths graduates. Many people come to GAD from other disciplines, such as physics or economics.

The selection process is demanding. To be considered, candidates must also demonstrate the following essential qualities:

Communication skills: Your clients will usually be unfamiliar with the techniques of actuarial work. You will need to be able to explain the concepts behind your analysis and the implications of your results.

Determination and responsibility: You must have the self-discipline and perseverance to combine study with the responsibilities of work, and tackle some of the most gruelling exams set by any profession.

Confidence and maturity: You should have the confidence to deal with decision-makers in government and industry, and the ability to take on management responsibilities.

REWARDS AND BENEFITS

For successful candidates the rewards lie not only in the variety and importance of the work they do; they also receive arguably one of the best actuarial training programmes in the industry and a highly competitive benefits package including:

- Competitive salary increasing significantly with exam success.
- Excellent training and support throughout your studies, including payment of all fees for tutorials, examinations subscriptions and counselling.
- Generous study leave of up to 50 days per year.
- 25 days' holiday rising to 30 days on qualification, plus 10.5 days' national and privilege holidays.
- 36-hour working week with flexi-time, with up to 2 days' flexi-leave per month.
- Generous inflation-proofed defined benefit pension scheme.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

As well as providing generous support to staff studying for actuarial exams, GAD also has an internal business training programme to help trainees develop new skills, grasp the opportunities we offer and assume new responsibilities including:

- A comprehensive induction and technical training programme during your first few months at GAD.
- In-house seminars and professional briefings.
- Managerial and business training including project management, team working, presentations, IT skills and managing client relationships.
- A friendly and cooperative working environment, where actuaries and senior students are enthusiastic about teaching new trainees and passing on their experience.



WHAT NEXT?

To find out more about the varied work of the Government Actuary's Department, visit www.gad.gov.uk

We encourage anyone considering a career in the actuarial profession to find out more about what it entails, and to seek further details about the actuarial examination syllabus from the Institute of Actuaries (England and Wales) or the Faculty of Actuaries (Scotland).

GAD is an equal opportunities employer. We do not discriminate on the grounds of sex, race, colour, religion, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, community background or age.



OCCUPATIONAL PENSIONS



The pension schemes we advise underpin the financial security of millions of people. The sums involved are so large that they have a significant bearing on the UK economy. Managing these schemes efficiently is therefore a critically important task, and it calls for actuarial skills of the highest order.

COMPLEX VARIABLES

In setting contribution levels and devising robust investment strategies that will stand the test of time, you will be tackling a complex array of variables. Economic, demographic and legislative factors, such as future levels of mortality, inflation and investment returns, all affect our clients' schemes – and ultimately determine the future comfort and well-being of many people.

SHIFTING LANDSCAPES

The outlook is constantly changing. People are living longer and working patterns are more flexible. Financial markets and instruments are developing rapidly. At the same time, professional standards such as solvency and accounting requirements continue to evolve. In anticipating and planning for changes like these, GAD is responsible for the financial health of some of the largest schemes in the UK, such as those for teachers, nurses, doctors and fire fighters.

Spanning public and private sectors:

GAD's strength in occupational pensions consultancy stems from its unique position as an actuarial consultancy whose core business is to serve organisations across the entire public sector. However, many of the services we provide have much in common with those offered by commercial actuarial consultancies. As a result, our skills are increasingly in demand among private-sector organisations, and a number of our recruits come to us from private sector actuarial backgrounds.

Advising public pensions schemes:

GAD advises the managers of some of the largest UK public service schemes. Mainly unfunded, these schemes have unique characteristics and requirements in areas where GAD has highly specialised expertise. We also advise a number of funded private schemes. Our projects range from carrying out actuarial valuations to evaluating and advising on accounting approaches and advising on the implementation and communication of structural changes to schemes.

Developing pensions policy:

GAD plays a pivotal role in the development of pensions policy for the public and private sectors through its advice to the UK Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the UK Pensions Regulator, HM Treasury and the UK Pension Protection Fund.

What might I be doing?

- Valuing assets and liabilities to ensure that schemes remain well funded.
- Assessing how legislative changes will affect our clients' schemes – and how to respond.
- Making cash flow projections that form the basis for financial strategies.
- Advising schemes on which benefits they should offer to their members.
- Analysing benefits offered to individuals transferring from the public to the private sector and ensuring that their benefits are not eroded as a result.
- Computing transfer values for individuals wishing to transfer their pension benefits.
- Advising schemes on which accounting approaches will be appropriate to their specific structures and objectives.

GAD's expertise in every aspect of social insurance is the result of more than eight decades of frontline experience in this field. Our capabilities are acknowledged around the world, and we are often called upon to advise foreign governments.

SOCIAL INSURANCE AND INSURANCE SUPERVISION



Social insurance, such as state pensions and unemployment, maternity and disability benefits, is essential to the welfare of millions of people across the UK. The first Government Actuary was appointed in 1917 in response to a growing need for actuarial advice relating to social security. Providing this advice in the UK and overseas continues to be a crucial part of our work.

The types of social insurance benefits available and contribution levels are decided by governments. But to be able to make realistic promises governments need long-term projections of the financial consequences of their decisions. This is where we come in. It's a strategic task in which GAD's skills are indispensable – not only for providing financial estimates but also for advising on the likely impact of changes in social security policy. Here are just four examples of our work:

Social Security review: Working with the government of a developed country, GAD provided projections of how many people would be eligible for social security benefits over a 60-year period and the financial implications of this.

Pensions reform: GAD analysed the options open to a developing country that wished to reform its basic state pension, including raising the pension age and differentiating between different types of pensioners.

Healthcare: Ageing populations demand increasing expenditure on healthcare. GAD is able to advise healthcare providers on how their expenditure may change and the effects of using different financing methods.

Actuarial training: Many developing countries have a shortage of actuarial skills. GAD therefore periodically provides training sessions on social security and actuarial issues, such as scheme design, funding methods and computer modelling.

What might I be doing?

As a trainee actuary in our Social Insurance Division, you will soon be working with experienced actuaries and other trainees on projects that may involve:

- Determining contributions for social security benefits.
- Forecasting benefits and contributions.
- Producing financial estimates used in managing and adapting existing benefits and contributions.
- Developing models to estimate the costs of setting up and financing new social security schemes.
- Advising on the impact of social insurance legislation on occupational pension schemes.

Insurance supervision

GAD has a growing insurance supervision team that provides advice to insurance supervisors and regulators around the world. The application of actuarial expertise is a key component in the efficient operation of insurers, insurance markets and insurance supervision. GAD's expertise in this field is often called upon by insurance supervisors in countries where actuarial skills are in short supply, or where full-time actuarial resources are not required. Most members of our insurance supervision team are experienced actuaries who have been recruited from the private sector.