

# Retail And Sales

## **Overview**

The [retail industry](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/retail/overview-of-the-retail-sector-in-the-uk) employs around three million people in the UK, making it the largest private sector employer with a sales value of £36.73 billion. There are many roles within the retail industry for graduate-level work, and the vast majority are open to graduates of any subject. Work can be found in shops, department stores, door-to-door sales, and online.

The [sales industry](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/sales/overview-of-the-uks-sales-industry) includes business-to-business (B2B) and business-to-consumer (B2C) sales roles, as well as related areas of work including export, direct/field sales and specialist areas such as pharmaceutical or IT sales.

Graduate schemes in retail and sales exist in many larger organisations, including supermarkets, car rental companies, online retailers, fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) and technology firms.

## **Roles**

Each job title links through to a broad job description, salary and conditions, entry requirements, typical recruiters, and links to further useful information.

### Retail roles include:

* [Retail buyer](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/retail-buyer)
* [Retail manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/retail-manager)
* [Retail merchandiser](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/retail-merchandiser)
* [Customer service manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/customer-service-manager)
* [Logistics and distribution manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/logistics-and-distribution-manager)
* [Visual merchandiser](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/visual-merchandiser)

### Sales roles include:

* [Sales executive](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/sales-executive)
* [Medical sales representative](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/medical-sales-representative)
* [IT sales professional](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/it-sales-professional)
* [Customer service manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/customer-service-manager)
* [Business development manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/business-development-manager)
* [Estate agent](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/estate-agent)
* [Purchasing/ procurement manager](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/procurement-manager)
* [Recruitment consultant](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/recruitment-consultant)
* [Sales promotion account executive](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/sales-promotion-account-executive)

## **Building Experience**

Experience in customer service roles and opportunities to develop and use your communication skills will be beneficial in the retail and sales industries. Working part-time in a shop or café, or in any role that requires interaction with customers will provide appropriate experience for a career in retail or sales.

Some larger organisations offer short-term placements during vacation periods, or internships. Sometimes these are also offered a year-long placement as part of your degree. Often, these roles require a combination of transferable skills like leadership, problem-solving, attention to detail, flexibility, and organization, with some specific sector skills, like commercial awareness and a passion for sales and retail.

## **Finding Opportunities**

Check [My Jobs Online](https://reading.targetconnect.net/student/login.html?remote=true) for vacancies and visit campus career fairs and employer presentations to find out more about which employers are advertising vacancies and coming onto campus.

Becoming a student member of one of the professional bodies, such as the [Institute of Sales Professionals](https://www.the-isp.org/) can offer member benefits, talks, events and volunteering and campus ambassador opportunities, with the chance to meet industry professionals.

### Industry Jobs

[Drapersjobs](https://www.drapersjobs.com/).com | [jobs.thegrocer.co.uk](https://jobs.thegrocer.co.uk/)| [Retailchoice](https://www.retailchoice.com/).com | [Simplysalesjobs](https://www.simplysalesjobs.co.uk/).co.uk

### Further Study/Research

[University of Reading](https://www.reading.ac.uk/ready-to-study/study/postgraduate-study.aspx) | [Find a Masters](https://www.findamasters.com/) | [Find a PhD](https://www.findaphd.com/)

### Graduate Jobs

[prospects](https://www.prospects.ac.uk/).ac.uk | [targetjobs](https://targetjobs.co.uk/).co.uk | [milkround](https://www.milkround.com/).com | [ratemyplacement](https://www.ratemyplacement.co.uk/).co.uk | [gradcracker](https://www.gradcracker.com/search/civil-building/environment-and-sustainability-jobs).com

## **Exploring Further**

[Retail-week](https://www.retail-week.com/).com – industry news, very useful for researching the sector before graduate job interviews

[Graduateland](https://graduateland.com/).com – useful European graduate jobs site, with many sales opportunities

[Pharmiweb](https://www.pharmiweb.jobs/jobs/sales-commercial/).jobs/jobs/sales-commercial – pharmaceutical industry jobs board, with many sales vacancies

The skills and knowledge you’ve developed in your degree will be valuable in a wide range of roles and sectors. If you’re thinking of looking further afield but aren’t sure where to start, why not [book an appointment](https://www.reading.ac.uk/essentials/Careers/Advice-and-development/MyJobsOnline) with one of our Careers Consultants? Remember, graduates can use the Careers Centre for up to two years after they graduate.

Explore our [Careers Blog](https://blogs.reading.ac.uk/careers/) for more industry guidance and useful careers advice!