



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Market Sector

Remote PA

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the Remote **PA** industry in Scotland, as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. A **Remote PA** is defined as **someone who offers outsourced administrative services to businesses from a remote location. It can also be known as a Virtual PA.** You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the Business Gateway website (www.bgateway.com/businessplan), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **January 2025**.

What do I need to know about the Virtual PA market?

The following summary statistics have been taken from market research reports and reliable resources that the Information Service uses to compile industry information. They should give you an indication of how your industry is faring at present and whether there is demand for your type of business:

- ◆ The Society of Virtual Assistants (the main body representing the industry in the UK), have over **3,500 members across the UK** ([Society of Virtual Assistants](#))
- ◆ Revenue from the UK Business Process Outsourcing services market is forecast to grow at a compound annual rate of **4.5% over the five years through 2029-30 to £91.7 billion**. A desire to cut costs and focus more on core business processes may lead to increased demand for outsourced business processes. On the other hand, the increased availability of technological solutions may allow businesses to more easily perform these functions in house. (IBISWorld, *Business process outsourcing services in the UK*, September 2024).
- ◆ The UK's Business Process Outsourcing sector is forecast to grow from **\$29.31 billion in 2024 to \$38.61 billion in 2029**. The sector includes diverse services including Customer Support, Finance and Accounting and Human Resources. Many UK businesses are turning to business process outsourcing as a way to cut costs and increase efficiency (Statista, *Business Process Outsourcing*, April 24)
- ◆ The average salary of Executive Assistants in the UK (not specifically virtual assistants) is £40,934 (according to [Reed](#)) and £23,500 (according to [Talent](#)).
- ◆ Bodies for this industry include the [UK Association of Virtual Assistants \(UKAVA\)](#), the [Society of Virtual Assistants](#) and the [Institute of Executive Assistants and Administrators](#).



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Where can I find more information on my market?

The Information Service has access to a number of databases which can offer more detail on this industry. Some of these reports are listed below - if you would like to be sent extracts from any of these reports, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

- ◆ Technavio - *Global Business Process Outsourcing market 2024-2028* (June 24). The UK Business Process Outsourcing market is forecast to grow at a compounded annual growth rate of **5.6% between 2024 and 2028**, rising from **\$14.6 billion in 2023 to \$19.2 billion in 2028**. This makes it the **4th fastest-growing country** in the market.
- ◆ IBISWorld - *Business Process Outsourcing services in the UK* (September 2024). The major markets for business process outsourcing services in the UK are the Finance & Insurance sector (with 24.6% of market share), the Public Sector (with 21.7%), Professional and Technical services (with 14.2%) and Manufacturing (with 11.5%).

There are also a number of online resources you may find helpful:

- ◆ [Find a VA \(Society of Virtual Assistants\)](#). allows you to search for Virtual Assistants, who meet the agreed standards of the Society. You can also apply to have your own business listed.
- ◆ [Resources \(UK Association of Virtual Assistants\)](#). provides template contracts covering different aspects of the Virtual Assistant role.
- ◆ [VA Pro Magazine](#). Includes articles on various aspects of working as a Virtual Assistant)
- ◆ [VA Conference](#). This is the annual UK Virtual Assistant conference.
- ◆ [PA salaries: UK, Ireland and key European countries \(Institute of Executive Assistants and Administrators\)](#). Includes information on average salaries for Personal Assistants (not specifically Virtual Assistants).

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How can I find out about my competitors?

Business Gateway's online guide to [Competitor Analysis](#) explains how to find your competitors, how to research what they're doing and how to act on what you learn about them.

Immediate competition will be from other businesses in your local area. There are several online directories which can be used to find company information and generate lists easily and at no expense. Many Local Authorities also publish local business directories on the web. Below are some key web resources:

- ◆ General business directories such as [Yell](#) ,[Thomson Local](#) or [Google Maps](#)
- ◆ Trade specialists like [EuroPages](#) (European directory), [The Wholesaler](#) or [Free Index](#)
- ◆ Business to business (B2B) specialists such as [Kompass](#)

Likewise, your local Chamber of Commerce may publish a members' directory; find your local Chamber on the [Scottish Chambers](#) website.

Once you've identified who your competitors are, the next step is to gather information on the way they do business. Which services do they provide? How do they market themselves? How much do they charge?

To learn about your competitors:

- ◆ Look for articles or adverts in local newspapers, trade press and directories.
- ◆ Try to read their marketing material; if the company has an online presence, visit the company's website as a first port of call. Not only does it give you a better understanding of the company's activities, it can also offer a wealth of information such as a company history or staff biographies, as well as the company's partners or suppliers
- ◆ Search for information on limited UK companies via the [Companies House](#) website
- ◆ Gain an insight into your competitor's performance using credit checks and the accounts that limited companies are required to submit to Companies House each year.

We can provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using this resource, or looking for us to help you find relevant publications, please contact us by emailing info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**



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What about suppliers?

[Choosing and Managing Suppliers](#) can help you decide what you need from a supplier, how to identify one and how to choose one to deal with.

Trade associations or industry specific organisations may also be able to recommend suppliers or contacts. You can also use the aforementioned resources for finding competitors to find suppliers.

Once you have decided on a supplier, we can run a credit check on the company to help assess their financial stability. We provide credit checks free of charge; if you are interested in using the resource please info@bgateway.com or by calling **0300 013 4753**.

Who are my customers?

Your business plan should include information about the customers you would expect. Business Gateway's guides on [Market and customer research](#) will help you to identify new trends, opportunities, customers and competitors.

It can be useful to group your customers by geographical location, age or lifestyle. The websites listed below are freely available and can provide most of this information. If you can't find what you're looking for from these websites, please contact us and one of the team will be happy to help:

- ◆ Access the latest population estimates from the [National Records of Scotland \(NRS\)](#). NRS also offers demographic factsheets for each council area in Scotland, which can provide summary statistics for the area you will be based in.
- ◆ Information from the most recent census in 2011 is released via the official website. See in particular the [Census Area Profiles](#). Clicking on your area of interest will give the latest population figures, including estimates by age.
- ◆ [Understanding Scottish Places](#) has interactive profiles of towns and cities across Scotland. It can be useful for understanding the interrelationships and flows between towns, and also gives comparisons between two or more places.
- ◆ [Scottish Government Statistics](#) provide accurate and up-to-date statistics on Scotland, covering population, health, education and housing.
- ◆ [The Scottish Household Survey](#) provides information on the structure, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour of Scottish households, both at a national and local level.
- ◆ [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#) is the recognised national statistical body for the UK. ONS covers a wide range of demographic, economic and social issues at a UK level.

How can you help me with other aspects of starting my business?

The Business Gateway website has guides, videos, online tutorials and tips on all aspects of starting up a business in Scotland. Follow the links below to explore each resource:

Accountancy

Institute of Chartered Accountants of Scotland's (ICAS) ["Find a Chartered Accountant"](#) tool

Funding

[Practical information](#) on finance and funding for starting and growing your business

Insurance

[Business insurance guide](#)

Legal Help

Gov.uk ["Licence Finder"](#) tool

Law Society of Scotland's ["Find a Solicitor"](#) tool

Pricing

Business Companion [Pricing & payment guide](#).

Please note: the most effective way to research pricing is to conduct your own research – visit wholesalers or suppliers to obtain price lists, find quotes from similar companies and work out what other businesses in your area are charging

Promotion

[BG guides to Marketing](#)

Training

[Skills Development Scotland's My World of Work](#)

[Funding for training](#)

[Small Business Bonus Scheme \(Scotland\)](#)

Your local Business Gateway can offer events, workshops and 1:2:1 support on all aspects of starting and developing your business. Call the helpline on **0300 013 4753** to find out what is available in your area.

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You must not rely on the information in the report as an alternative to advice from an appropriately qualified professional. If you have any specific questions speak to your Business Gateway Advisor or consult an appropriately qualified professional.

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