



Market Report

A Snapshot of your Marketing Sector

Hair and Beauty Therapy

This pack has been designed to provide information on setting up a business in the **hair and beauty therapy** industry in Scotland (which includes **hairdressers, beauty therapists and make-up artists**), as well as helping to inform the market research section of your business plan. You can find more information on how to write a business plan from the [Business Gateway Plan Guide \(May 2025\)](#), including an interactive template and tips to get you started.

This market report was updated by Business Gateway in **May 2026**.

What do I need to know about the hair and beauty therapy 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:

- ◆ There were **3,940** hairdressing and beauty salons in Scotland in the **first quarter of 2025**, employing **14,460** people. Total turnover was **£512 million** ([Office for National Statistics, Hairdressing and beauty salons 2025, October 2025](#)).
- ◆ In **2025**, UK consumers spent a total of **£10,275 million** on hairdressing salons and other personal grooming establishments, an increase of **4%** compared to the previous year ([Office for National Statistics, Consumer trends: current price, not seasonally adjusted, March 26](#)).
- ◆ In 2022, average weekly household expenditure on hairdressing and beauty treatments in the UK was **£3.60**. People in the **50-64 age group** had the highest weekly expenditure (**£4.20 per week**). ([Statista, Hair and beauty salons in the UK](#))
- ◆ Demand for corporate wellness services has increased due to more research and awareness on the toll that injury and illness can take on business. At the same time, the industry has been hit by staff reductions at major institutions and competition from in-house services ([IBISWorld, Corporate wellness services in the UK, October 2025](#))
- ◆ In **2024** there were **50,438** hairdressing and beauty businesses in the UK, an **increase of 2%** compared to the previous year. Total turnover from this industry was **£ 5,133 million**, a **decrease of 5%** compared to the previous year ([Office for National Statistics, Annual Business Survey: Non-financial business economy, UK, April 25](#)).
- ◆ **59% of women** say they use beauty products to prevent their skin from ageing while only **25% of men** say this. **57% of people** said they stick to what they know when it comes to beauty products ([YouGov, Key insights into Britons' attitudes towards beauty and personal care, November 2024](#)).
- ◆ According to **2025 figures**, the vast majority of hairdressing and beauty businesses were **small: 93% had turnover of less than £250,00 and 96% had fewer than 10 employees** ([Office for National Statistics, UK business: activity, size and location, Sep 25](#)).
- ◆ In **2024**, **85%** of the hairdressing workforce were female and **58%** were self-employed. In line with recent trends, the total workforce declined by around **16,500 (7.5%)** people in **2024** ([National Hair and Beauty Federation, 2024 industry statistics](#))
- ◆ According to Bridebook, the average cost of wedding hair and makeup in **2026 was £811** (ranging from **£200-£1,500**) ([Bridebook, The average cost of a UK wedding in 2026 is £20,604, March 2026](#)).

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Where can I find more information on my market?

The following UK organisations represent businesses working in the hair and beauty industry:

- ◆ [National Hair and Beauty Federation](#)
- ◆ [British Association of Beauty Therapy and Cosmetology \(BABTAC\)](#)
- ◆ [Guild of Beauty Therapists](#)
- ◆ [Hairdressing and Beauty Suppliers Association](#)
- ◆ [British Beauty Council](#)
- ◆ [National Hair and Beauty Federation \(NHBF\)](#)
- ◆ [Hair and Beauty Industry Association \(HABIA\)](#)
- ◆ [Broadcasting Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union Hair \(BECTU\), Make-Up and Prosthetics branch](#)

The [National Library of Scotland](#) provides free access to a range of [eResources for Scottish businesses](#). These include **IBISWorld** reports such as **Hairdressing & beauty treatment (May 2026)**, **Corporate wellness services (May 2026)**, **Health & wellness spas (May 2026)** and **COBRA** reports such as **Freelance hairdresser (April 2025)** and **Beauty salon (March 2025)**.

The following resources may also be helpful when setting up your business:

- ◆ The Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (ICAEW) provides a useful summary of available resources on the hair and beauty market in the UK - [Hairdressing and beauty treatment in the UK: industry profile \(ICAEW, May 2026\)](#)
- ◆ The following directories may be useful in identifying businesses in the hair beauty therapy industry: [NHBF – find a hair or beauty business](#), [Beauty Guild – search the professional registers](#) and [BABTAC – locate your nearest therapist](#)
- ◆ The Federation of Small Businesses (FSB) provides a guide to health and safety procedures - [10 health and safety procedures for a hair and beauty salon \(FSB, June 2024\)](#).
- ◆ BECTU provides some information on [hair and make-up rates in film and TV](#).

The Information Service provides a bespoke research service for all Scottish businesses. If you have a more detailed research enquiry that you would like to explore, please contact us on **0300 013 4753** or email info@bgateway.com.

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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.



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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 and Sales](#)

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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Last updated: May 2026

Updated by: Louise Morrison

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