**Secretary/administrator:Job description**

A secretary or administrator provides both clerical and administrative support to professionals, either as part of a team or individually. The role plays a vital part in the administration and smooth-running of businesses throughout industry.

Secretaries/administrators are involved with the coordination and implementation of office procedures and frequently have responsibility for specific projects and tasks and, in some cases, oversee and supervise the work of junior staff.

The role varies greatly depending on the sector, the size of the employer and levels of responsibility. Most work involves both written and oral communication, word processing and typing, and requires relevant skills such as IT, organisational and presentation skills, as well as the ability to multi-task and work well under pressure.

In some cases, secretaries/administrators are required to have high-level qualifications and previous experience in specialist sectors, such as law, for example.

The role can often overlap with that of a [personal assistant](http://www.prospects.ac.uk/personal_assistant.htm).

## Typical work activities

Common tasks include:

* word processing;
* audio and copy typing;
* letter writing;
* dealing with telephone and email enquiries;
* creating and maintaining filing systems;
* scheduling and attending meetings, creating agendas and taking minutes - shorthand may be required;
* keeping diaries and arranging appointments;
* organising travel for staff.

Depending on the sector, the role may also include many of the following:

* using a variety of software packages, such as Microsoft Word, Outlook, Powerpoint, Excel, Access, etc., to produce correspondence and documents and to maintain presentations, records, spreadsheets and databases;
* devising and maintaining office systems;
* booking rooms and conference facilities;
* using content management systems to maintain and update websites and internal databases;
* managing and maintaining budgets, as well as invoicing;
* liaising with staff in other departments and with external contacts;
* ordering and maintaining stationery and equipment;
* sorting and distributing incoming post and organising and sending outgoing post;
* arranging travel and accommodation for staff or customers and other external contacts;
* liaising with colleagues and external contacts to book travel and accommodation;
* organising and storing paperwork, documents and computer-based information;
* photocopying and printing various documents, sometimes on behalf of other colleagues;
* recruiting, training and supervising junior staff and delegating work as required;
* manipulating statistical data;
* arranging in-house and external events