Engineering

Do you want to work in an industry that makes a very real impact on the world around us? Would you like to design aircraft, ships or cars, or find new ways of generating renewable energy to make sure that thousands of homes have heating and lighting?

Engineers use science and technology to come up with the answers to practical problems. They design, develop, build, fix and put all types of things together.

If you have an enquiring mind, enjoy problem solving and making things work, and like using technology to design new products, structures or systems, then engineering could be the career for you.

According to Engineering UK, there were around 6.3 million people working in engineering and technology occupations, accounting for 19% of the UK workforce. [1]

What areas can I work in?

There are all sorts of engineers working in hundreds of different industries. Areas include: aeronautical, chemical and material, electrical and electronic, mechanical and manufacturing (including fabrication and welding), naval and marine, offshore and energy, and general engineering.

Related industries include computing & ICT and construction, for jobs such as software engineer and civil or structural engineer.

To see the routes to getting into each of these sectors, take a look at our Career Pathway.

What kind of companies can I work for?

Possible employers include:

- energy and utility companies
- aircraft and aerospace engineering firms
- pharmaceutical, plastics, paper, textiles manufacturers
- food and drink manufacturers
- oil and gas companies
- general manufacturing firms
- telecommunications and IT companies
- defence
- marine
- Civil Service or National Health Service (NHS)
- transport.

What's the job market like?

In Scotland in 2025, there were 118,300 people working in the engineering sector[2] and 92,700 people working in

the energy sector, accounting for 4.4% and 3.4% of Scottish employment respectively. [3]

The engineering sector is estimated to have declined by 22.6% between 2015 and 2025. The highest levels of engineering employment were recorded in Aberdeen City and Shire (28,200) and the Glasgow College Region (20,000). 2 By contrast, employment in the energy sector is estimated to have grown by 0.7%, with the largest concentrations again in Aberdeen City and Shire (46,100) and the Glasgow College Region (9,100).[3]

Notably, job postings for fuel cell engineers increased by 53.2% between July 2024 and June 2025 compared with the previous year, with employers seeking specialist skills in smart metering systems, safety procedures, electrical power distribution systems, and auditing. [3]

The mid-term forecast indicates that employment in Scotland's engineering sector is expected to grow by 1.1% between 2025 and 2028, equivalent to an increase of around 1,300 jobs. Over this period, demand for approximately 5,800 workers is anticipated, driven by the need to replace those leaving the labour market as well as opportunities arising from expansion. [2]

Over the same mid-term period (2025–2028), employment in the energy sector is forecast to decline by 1.1%, or around 1,800 jobs. Despite this projected reduction, demand for approximately 8,500 workers is expected, primarily due to replacement demand. By 2028, the energy workforce is forecast to total around 91,000 people. [3]

There are ongoing challenges in the engineering and technology workforce, with certain groups underrepresented: women (17%), disabled people (14%), and people from minority ethnic groups (15%). [1]

[3]

Facts and figures

- In the UK, from the academic year 2022/23, 70.9% of electrical and electronic engineering graduates were in full time employment 15 months after graduating, with 52.6% pursuing careers within engineering and building professions and 21.8% going into IT. [4]
- From that same period, 68% of mechanical engineering graduates were in full time employment 15 months after graduating. Of those, 65% were working as engineering and building professionals. For chemical engineering graduates, the figures were 69% and 55.3% respectively. [4]
- Between June 2024 and June 2025, the median real time advertised salary in Scotland for Offshore Manager posts was £64,900 per annum 3, and for Mechanical Engineers £42,400, and Welders £37,300. [2]

Want to find out more?

Neon Futures and My Energy Future are excellent sources of information on careers in engineering and energy.

Sources

[1] The Engineering and Technology Workforce, Engineering UK (April 2026)

[2] Sectoral Skills Assessment: Engineering, Skills Development Scotland (October 2025)

[3] Sectoral Skills Assessment: Energy, Skills Development Scotland (October 2025)

[4] What do graduates do? Prospects (part of Jisc) and AGCAS (2025/26)