

Groundsperson

Groundspeople look after sports and recreation grounds, including football, rugby and cricket pitches, tennis courts, golf courses and bowling greens. They keep the soil, grass and turf in good condition. They are also known as greenkeepers or sportsturf managers.

The Work

You could be:

- cutting grass with a mower and using a range of other tools, both powered and manual
- watering or fertilising grass, removing weeds or reseeding damaged patches
- maintaining and repairing grounds made of artificial materials
- marking out lines on playing fields and courts
- setting up equipment such as nets and posts
- installing and removing weatherproof covers
- looking after borders, hedges and flowerbeds in the grounds
- repairing walls and paths or digging ditches to drain water
- ensuring that playing surfaces meet the regulations of the relevant sporting body.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- where you work
- the size of company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

Starting pay is often based on the National Minimum Wage (NMW) or the National Living Wage (NLW).

As of 1 April 2023 the National Minimum Wage is £5.28 an hour for workers under 18, £7.49 an hour for workers aged 18 to 20 and £10.18 an hour for workers aged 21 to 22. The National Living Wage for those aged 23 and over is £10.42 an hour.

A junior groundsperson can expect to earn around £16,000 a year rising to between £18,000 to £24,000 a year with experience. A head groundsperson earns around £30,000 to £40,000 a year.

Conditions

- You could work for a sports club, a local council recreation department, a school, college or university, private estates or a landscape contractor.
- You might be based at one site or working over several different sites.
- You would work alone or in a small team, depending on where you work.
- You would have to work outdoors in all weathers.
- You would have to wear protective clothing in wet weather and when using fertilisers and pesticides.

- Your hours could be long, including early mornings, evenings or weekends, especially if you are making grounds ready for events.

Getting In

- A good general education is useful, and some employers may look for some subjects at National 4 or 5.
- You may get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Horticulture (Sports Turf) which will normally lead to SVQ at SCQF Levels 5 and 6.
- You could take a full time course leading to an NC or NQ (SCQF Levels 4-6) in a relevant subject before applying for a job. For example, an NC in Horticulture or Greenkeeping.
- Entry requirements for these courses vary from no formal qualifications up to 4-5 subjects at National 4 or 5.
- Previous work experience on a sports ground is helpful.
- You must be fit, as you will be active all day.
- A driving licence is useful, and for some posts may be essential.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- practical and methodical
- good practical skills
- good with numbers, to work out quantities of pesticides and seeds
- able to work on your own as well as part of a team
- observant, to spot damage to sports grounds
- able to work in cold, wet or windy weather
- aware of safety issues when using machines.

You need to have some technical knowledge of soil and plant biology. Groundspeople usually have a strong interest in sport and the environment.

Training

- Training is usually on the job, supervised by the head groundsman or woman.
- You would usually also do part time study at college for an SVQ such as Horticulture (Sports Turf) at SCQF Levels 5 and 6.
- You might do extra specialist training for certificates in chemical spraying, chainsaw use and first aid.
- You can also study for qualifications from the [British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association \(BIGGA\)](http://www.bigga.org.uk) and the [Grounds Management Association](http://www.groundsmanagement.org.uk) while you are working.

Getting On

- With experience, you may be able to move up to be a supervisor or junior manager with responsibility for other staff.
- You may later be able to become a head groundsperson.
- Eventually, you could become an area manager with responsibility for several sites.

- Other possibilities include working for a private contractor or becoming self-employed.

Contacts

British and International Golf Greenkeepers Association (BIGGA)

Tel: 01347 833800

Email: info@bigga.co.uk

Website: www.bigga.org.uk

Twitter: @BIGGALtd

Facebook: www.facebook.com/golfgreenkeepers

Chartered Institute of Horticulture

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Grounds Management Association

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Website: thegma.org.uk

Twitter: @thegma_

Facebook: www.facebook.com/groundsmangementassociation

Lantra Scotland

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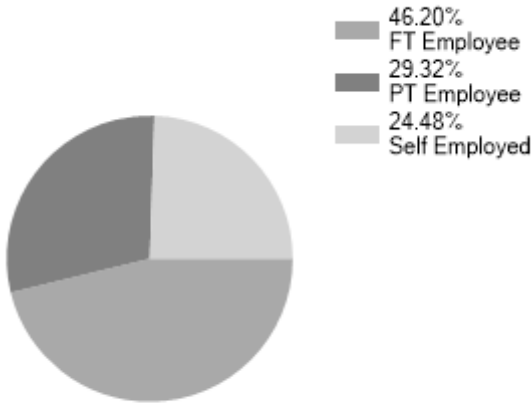
Website: www.scotland.lantra.co.uk

Twitter: @LantraScotland

Facebook: www.facebook.com/lantrascotland

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

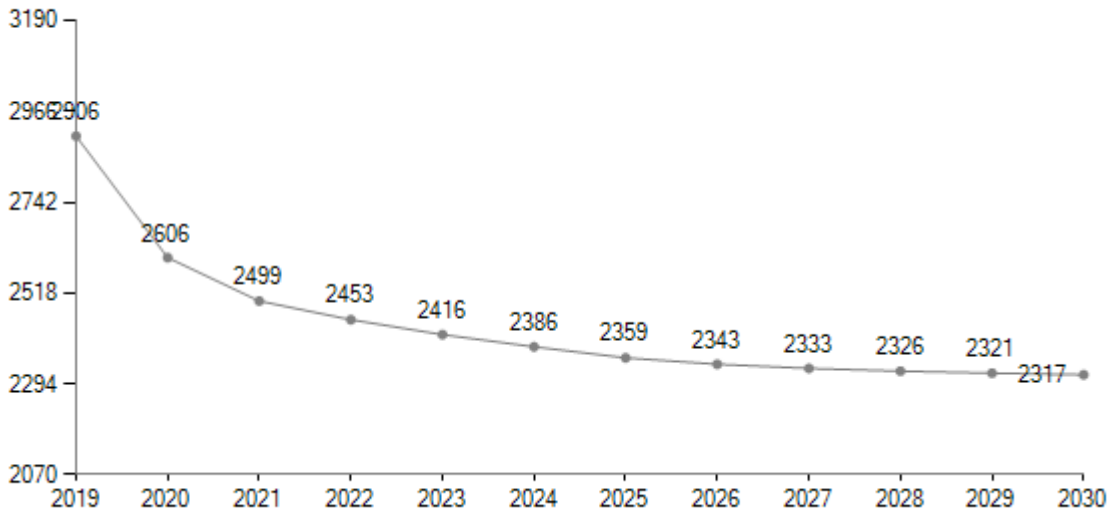


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)