

Scaffolder

A scaffolder uses tools to build a framework of interconnected metal tubes with timber walkways, so that construction workers can reach high levels of buildings during construction or renovation.

The Work

You could be:

- unloading scaffolding, laying base plates to stop the scaffolding slipping and then putting up scaffolding poles
- fitting tubes of metal scaffolding into gaps in the brickwork of a building under construction or clamping the scaffolding to window arches or other convenient structures in an existing building
- taking accurate measurements, to follow safety regulations about maximum distance between upright poles and minimum width of platforms
- securing the poles to each other with couplings
- fixing wooden platforms, guard rails, ladders, hoists and safety nets
- taking the structure down again when job is finished
- erecting a scaffolding tower on castors, for use inside a building
- erecting platforms or spectator stands for public events.

Pay

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

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

As of June 2025 the Building and Allied Trades Joint Industrial Council (BATJIC) recommends the following rates for a 4-year apprenticeship in Scotland based on a 39-hour week are:

Year 1 – £303.28 (£7.78 an hour)

Year 2 – £401.70 (£10.30 an hour)

Year 3 – £490.48 (£12.58 an hour)

Year 4 – £490.48 (£12.58 an hour) (without SCQF Level 6)

Year 4 – £546.71 (£14.02 an hour) (with SCQF Level 6).

Please note these rates may vary if the Apprentice is 21 years old or over and has completed the first year of their apprenticeship. National Minimum Wage (NMW) and National Living Wage (NLW) will apply.

A scaffolder with CISRS Parts 1 and 2 could expect to earn £400 to £800 a week. A supervisor would earn more. Overtime and bonus payments are also available.

Conditions

- You have to climb up while carrying heavy weights, and work with heavy poles at heights. The poles are long and difficult to handle.
- You have to bend, lift, balance and kneel.
- You wear protective gear – hard hat, footwear, overalls and perhaps safety harness.
- You travel to different sites and sometimes live away from home.
- The working day begins early and varies according to hours of daylight with occasional lay-offs in winter.
- You would work around 40 hours a week, often working overtime in the evenings and at weekends.
- Many contracts are short-term.

Getting In

- You start training with an employer and follow the [Construction Industry Scaffolder's Record Scheme \(CISRS\)](#), which is the nationally recognised training scheme for scaffolding.
- [The National Construction College Scotland](#) offers apprenticeships in scaffolding.
- You do not always need formal qualifications, but some employers ask for subjects at National 4 or 5 including English, Maths and a science or technological subject.
- You could study the Foundation Apprenticeship in Construction (SCQF Level 4 or 5) in S3-S6, which can help to get into a relevant Modern Apprenticeship.
- Some employers would expect you to have experience working as a labourer.
- You have to take the [Construction Industry Training Board \(CITB\)](#) Health and Safety test or equivalent.
- A driving licence is useful and may be necessary.
- You must hold a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card or equivalent to work on a site.

Look for jobs in large and small construction companies or in the oil industry. Many scaffolders work on short term contracts or are self-employed.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a good head for heights and good balance
- good hand to eye co-ordination
- a responsible attitude
- a methodical and well organised approach
- an awareness of health and safety matters.

You need to be able to:

- work with your hands
- follow written and spoken instructions carefully
- read technical plans and drawings accurately
- work as part of a team.

Training

- You need to take the CISRS Operative Training Scheme (COTS) 1-day training course and a health, safety and environment test to get the Scaffolder Labourer Green Card.
- You then complete the CISRS Scaffolding Part 1 course and a health, safety and environment test to get the Trainee Scaffolder Red Card.
- You must then complete six months experience on site and then the CISRS Scaffolding Part 2 course.
- Throughout your training you work towards the SVQ Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction): Scaffolding at SCQF Level 5.
- Once you have completed the above, plus the CISRS Level 2 Skills Assessment, you can apply for the CISRS Scaffolder (Blue) card.

Getting On

- Once you have held your scaffolder card for at least 12 months, you can complete the advanced scaffolder training course and complete SVQ Accessing Operations and Rigging (Construction): Scaffolding and Offshore Scaffolding at SCQF Level 6.
- To become a supervisor you would complete the 5-day CISRS Scaffolding Supervisor course.
- You could become an inspector of scaffolding or an adviser in working at heights.
- Many scaffolders become self-employed.

Contacts

GoConstruct

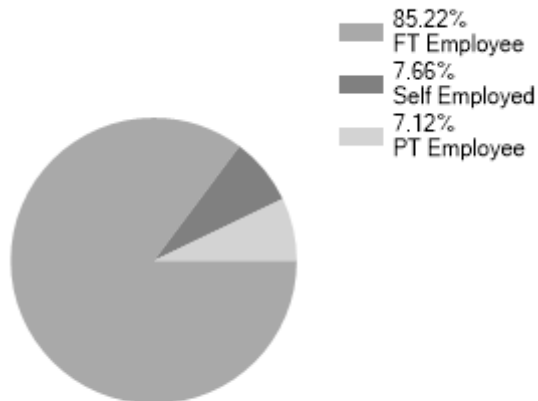
Website: www.goconstruct.org

X: @GoConstructUK

Facebook: www.facebook.com/goconstructuk

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

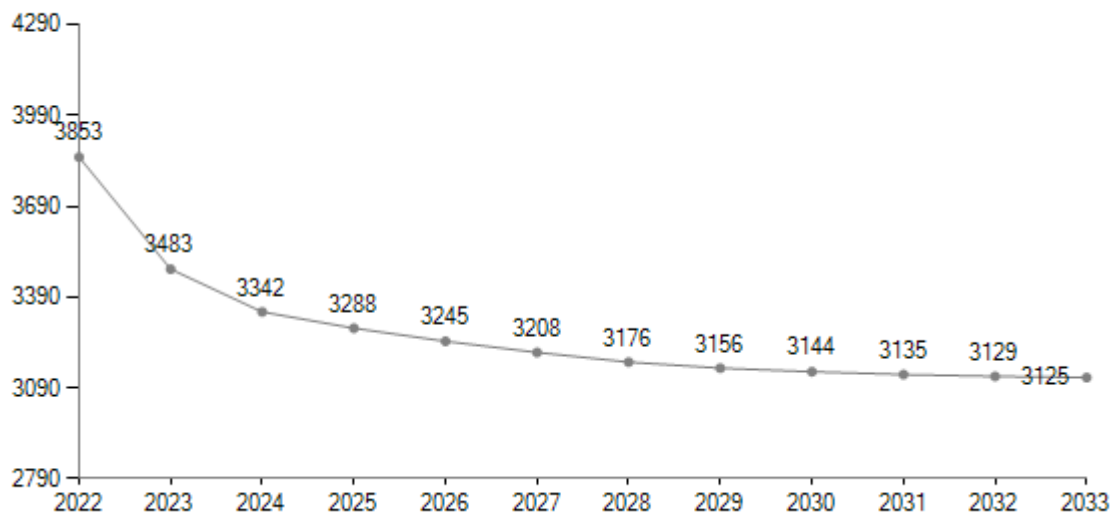


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)