

Paramedic

A paramedic responds to emergency calls as part of an emergency team, or as a first responder, using procedures they have been trained to do. They usually work in a two-person crew alongside a technician or care assistant. However, they can also work on their own using a motorbike to attend to a call out.

The Work

You could be:

- assessing the patient's condition and making a decision on treatment
- operating advanced life saving or life support equipment in emergency situations
- using defibrillators (to restore the heart's rhythm), spinal and traction splints, and intravenous drips
- giving medication and oxygen to patients in emergency situations
- taking charge at an incident until a senior officer arrives
- handing over the patient to the medical or nursing staff at the hospital, giving them a factual verbal report of the patient's condition
- completing patient report forms
- working with police and fire service crews.

Pay

Ambulance staff who work for the NHS are paid on the Agenda for Change scales. The current pay scales are from April 2025. Paramedics are on Band 6, £43,169 to £52,603 a year.

Conditions

- Your base would be the ambulance station or hospital but you would spend much of your time out in the ambulance attending to patients in accidents and emergencies.
- You would work shifts including evenings, nights and weekends.
- You would be faced with distressing situations.
- You would wear a uniform or sometimes other protective clothing such as helmet or high visibility jacket.

Getting In

- To become a paramedic, you must complete the BSc in Paramedic Science or Paramedicine at an approved university. Currently within Scotland this is offered at Glasgow Caledonian University, Queen Margaret University, Robert Gordon University, the University of Stirling and the University of the West of Scotland. On successful completion you can apply for vacancies as a qualified paramedic.
- Typical entry is 4 Highers at ABBB/BBBB/BBBC (widening access entry is available) including a science subject and English and Maths at National 5. Check individual universities for specific entry requirements.
- Alternatively you could complete an HNC or HND in a health or science based subject at college before progressing to degree.
- All applicants must pass the Scottish Ambulance Service entrance test including accident and emergency fitness test, interview and occupational health screening.

- You must have a full current Category C1 driving licence. You will also be required to undertake a pre-employment driving assessment. You must have no more than 3 penalty points.
- You must pass an entrance exam and a medical examination. You must be physically fit.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

Job vacancies appear on the [NHS Scotland](#) website. Most ambulance work is with the NHS, but there are also jobs with the armed services. There are some private ambulance companies around the UK including one or two in Scotland.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- able to get on with people from all backgrounds and of all ages
- patient and understanding – you will be dealing with patients who may be distressed or in pain
- reliable
- able to work well in a team
- willing to take control of a situation
- able to remain calm in emergencies and cope with unpleasant sights
- quick thinking and able to make decisions in difficult situations
- resilient and able to deal with the emotional impact of distressing situations.

Training

- You will study for the degree in Paramedic Science or Paramedicine at university and complete a number of placements within the health and social care sector.
- Successful completion of the BSc Paramedic Science or Paramedicine leads to eligibility to apply for registration with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC). You require this to work in the NHS.
- You will continue to keep your skills and knowledge up to date through Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The Scottish Ambulance Service provides annual 'learning in practice' training opportunities.

Getting On

- All UK ambulance service trusts offer a Newly Qualified Paramedic programme that will allow new paramedics to transition from education into their new role.
- You may be promoted to senior paramedic working from a response car.
- With experience you could become a clinical advisor within an Emergency Medical Dispatch Centre.
- With further training you could join the air ambulance service which operates from Aberdeen, Glasgow and Inverness.

More Information

The Scottish Government offers eligible paramedic students a bursary. For 2024/25 this is £10,000 which is paid in

monthly instalments throughout the course.

You can also visit this great resource [NHS Education Scotland Virtual Tour](#) to learn more about this job.

Contacts

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Scottish Ambulance Service

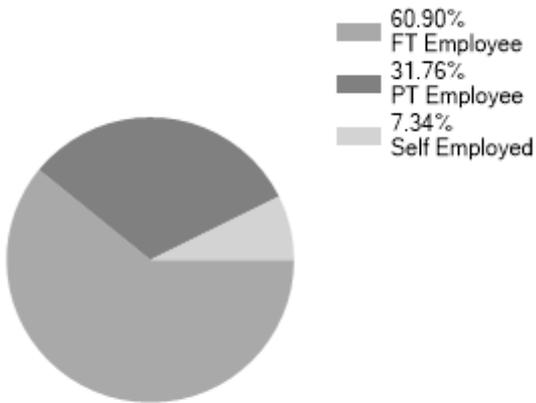
Website: www.scottishambulance.com

X: @Scotambservice

Facebook: www.facebook.com/scotambservice

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.