

## Environmental Health Officer

Environmental health officers (EHOs) help protect members of the public from disease and other dangers to health. They advise and educate organisations on how to meet regulations and make sure that they are enforced.

They deal with safety of food and water, housing, air and noise pollution, epidemic control, pest control and waste disposal.

### The Work

You could be:

- inspecting shops, restaurants, abattoirs (slaughterhouses) or refuse disposal sites to check that they meet with official hygiene standards
- providing advice and information to local businesses, the public and national agencies
- checking levels of air, noise, water and land pollution using scientific equipment
- taking photos and video evidence
- visiting residences in response to complaints from the neighbours and proposing changes
- tracing sources of food-poisoning and collecting samples for analysis
- monitoring the water in public swimming pools
- writing detailed reports of visits and recommendations
- collecting information and appearing in court to give evidence in court cases.

### Pay

Pay rates vary, depending on:

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

Trainee environmental health officers in their third year placement earn around £25,000 a year.

Salaries for qualified environmental health officers in the UK tend to be in the range of £43,000 to £48,000 a year. Senior EHOs can earn up to around £50,000 a year.

### Conditions

- You would work in an office, but spend a lot of time visiting premises – some of which may be dirty, unpleasant or dangerous.
- The people running the premises you visit might be angry or aggressive.
- You may have to work at heights or in confined spaces.
- You would sometimes have to wear protective clothing.
- You might have to attend law courts to give evidence.
- Working hours are usually regular but you might have to work some evenings and weekends.

## Getting In

- You might be able to get into a junior role by completing the Modern Apprenticeship in Regulatory Studies at SCQF Level 7, then going to do further study.
- You would need to study for an MSc (SCQF Level 11) or BSc Hons (SCQF Level 10) in Environmental Health accredited by the Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS).
- After you have your BSc or MSc, you would complete a 1-year training programme with a local authority. This can be completed with an employer during university holidays over 4 years. You would then be eligible to register with REHIS and receive a copy of the current Scheme of Professional Practice.
- You will be required to keep a training record, including a portfolio of evidence, detailing your practical work.
- After completing your practical training, you will be required to pass the Professional Examination, and will receive the REHIS Diploma in Environmental Health. This is required to practice as an environmental health officer in Scotland.
- You need a driving licence.
- You should be healthy as you might be exposed to infectious diseases and unhealthy conditions.

Most EHOs in Scotland work for local authorities or for government agencies such as the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA), but you could move into work in the private sector; in hotels, the catering industry or food manufacturing.

## What Does It Take

You should be:

- concerned about the environment and its effect on public health
- impartial and fair
- able to pay attention to detail
- computer literate
- able to prioritise your workload
- assertive and firm when dealing with uncooperative and perhaps angry people
- able to gather facts, assess situations and decide on action.

You need to have:

- team working skills and the ability to work alone
- good written and spoken communication skills
- the ability to write reports and keep accurate records
- good scientific and technical abilities
- an ability to get on well with people from a wide range of backgrounds.

## Training

- Once you have completed the 1-year training programme to get your REHIS Diploma, you gain experience through further on the job training.

- The REHIS runs professional courses on a range of food and environmental health topics.
- You would take short courses to keep up to date.

## Getting On

- You might specialise in a particular area of work – you might take further courses to do this.
- You might move on to become a section leader or chief environmental health officer.
- You might become a self-employed consultant.

## Contacts

### **Royal Environmental Health Institute of Scotland (REHIS)**

Tel: 0131 229 2968

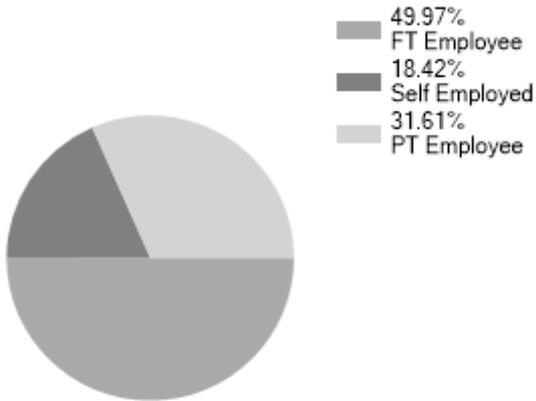
Email: [contact@rehis.com](mailto:contact@rehis.com)

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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.