

Vehicle Breakdown Engineer

A vehicle breakdown engineer checks vehicles at the roadside to find out why they have broken down and either repairs them on the spot or tows them away to a garage.

They are also known as Roadside Assistance Technicians.

The Work

You could be:

- responding to emergency call-outs from a call centre
- using the directions or postcode given to you by the customer to find the broken down vehicle
- examining the vehicle on the spot, using high-tech diagnostic equipment, to try to identify faults
- reassuring the driver and passengers
- deciding whether the vehicle can be repaired at the roadside and, if so, trying to do so quickly using the spare parts and tools available
- advising the driver what work needs to be done to the vehicle
- loading vehicles that can't be fixed onto the back of your vehicle and taking the car and passengers to the nearest approved garage or their home
- phoning your base for instructions and advice
- keeping records of all work done.

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.

Salaries for vehicle breakdown engineers start at around £25,000 a year. With further experience this can rise to between £35,000 to £40,000 or more. Some employers offer additional benefits such as company pension and staff discount schemes.

Conditions

- You would travel a great deal, sometimes in hazardous conditions.
- You would have to try to carry out repairs quickly, outdoors in all weathers, close to passing traffic and at times under pressure.
- You would wear overalls to protect you against oil and grease.
- Most of the time you would work alone.
- At times you would have to work shifts and be on call to cover evenings, nights, weekends and public holidays (particularly busy times for vehicle patrols).

Getting In

- Entrants are usually qualified motor vehicle technicians, with the appropriate Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) at (SCQF Level 7) or equivalent qualification (see [Motor Vehicle Technician](#)), including relevant work experience.
- To train as a motor vehicle technician, you do not always need formal qualifications but many employers look for English, Maths and a science or technological subject at National 4.
- You could study the Foundation Apprenticeship in Automotive (SCQF Level 4) in S3-S6, which can help to get into a relevant Modern Apprenticeship.
- You may have to take an aptitude test.
- A clean driving licence is essential and a Large Goods Vehicle (LGV) licence could be useful.
- You should apply to the DVLA for a digital tachograph driver smart card (digicard) and the DVSA for a Driver Certificate of Professional Competence (CPC) card. The CPC card is given after 35 hours periodic training. This is sometimes called a Driver Qualification Card (DQC).
- If you apply as a qualified motor vehicle technician, you may have to pass a driving assessment and written tests and show technical skill.
- You would need to pass a medical examination.

Many vehicle breakdown engineers work for the large national breakdown services such as the AA, the RAC and Green Flag. You may also work in garages, which have contracts with one of these companies and other motoring organisations.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- very responsible
- safety conscious
- able to work quickly, carefully and accurately
- a good communicator
- flexible
- able to work reliably on your own.

You need to have:

- a good sense of direction
- a strong interest in motor vehicles
- good concentration
- an eye for detail
- technical knowledge and practical skills
- a reassuring manner with customers.

Training

- You will already be a qualified motor vehicle technician with several years' experience.
- You may work towards the IMI Roadside Accreditation. This involves sitting practical exams and

completing online knowledge tests. There are four levels of job roles within IMI Accreditation Roadside: Tyre Technician, Assistance/Recovery Technician, Diagnostic Technician and Master Technician.

- Organisations such as the AA and the RAC may offer their own training schemes.

Getting On

- You may be able to move on to a management role.
- In the larger organisations you could become a training instructor.

More Information

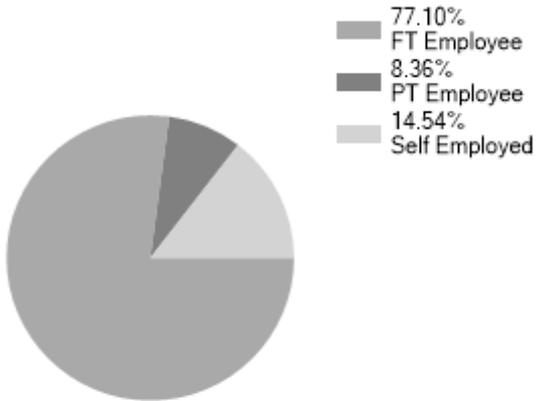
For more information please see organisations listed below:

- [Autocity](#)
- [Automobile Association](#) (AA)
- [Institute of the Motor Industry](#) (IMI) (Scotland)
- [Royal Automobile Club](#) (RAC)

Contacts

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.