

Meat Process Worker

Meat process workers prepare meat, fish or seafood for sale to butchers, supermarkets, hotels, makers of meat products and other customers.

The Work

You could work in a number of different areas including:

- an abattoir or slaughterhouse - see the separate job profile for [Abattoir Operative](#)
- meat wholesaling
- catering supplies
- meat manufacturing.

In **meat wholesaling** you could be:

- cutting and boning carcasses using saws, knives or machinery
- filleting fish using knives
- peeling, shelling and preparing seafood, such as prawns and mussels
- weighing, wrapping and labelling meat, fish and seafood
- storing the meat, fish or seafood in a chiller or freezer, then selling it.

In **catering supplies** you could be:

- buying carcasses and cutting meat or fish into required pieces
- weighing, wrapping and labelling the cuts of meat or fish or portions of seafood
- selling and delivering the meat or fish and seafood to hotels, restaurants and other customers.

In **meat manufacturing** you could be:

- working on a production line making pies, sausages and other meat products
- weighing, wrapping and labelling meat products
- using machinery for some operations and doing some work by hand.

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.

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

As of 1 April 2026 the National Minimum Wage is £8.00 an hour for workers under 18, £10.85 an hour for workers

aged 18 to 20. The National Living Wage for those aged 21 and over is £12.71 an hour.

Some employers pay rates up to £12.50 an hour. Shift allowances and overtime pay may be available.

Conditions

- You would usually work in a factory, but in some smaller companies you might be in a large industrial kitchen.
- You may have to do shift work and possibly overtime. Depending on the job, you might have early starts and late finishes.
- You would wear protective clothing: overalls, hats and boots; perhaps metal chain mail when using large knives.
- You would have to lift heavy carcasses.
- Conditions might be cold, particularly in refrigerated areas and you might have to handle frozen meat.
- It might be noisy (you might wear ear protectors), messy and with strong, unpleasant smells.
- You would use dangerous machinery, knives and saws while working at speed.

Getting In

- You do not need formal qualifications.
- You may be able to get direct entry to a job with on the job training.
- You may be able to enter through a Modern Apprenticeship with training leading to an SVQ.

Most meat process work is done in large companies, but there are also some smaller, specialist companies.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- a practical approach
- a steady hand
- a reliable, responsible attitude to work, especially in following health and safety
- a knowledge of food hygiene.

You need to be able to:

- cope with blood and mess
- concentrate well
- work as part of a team
- work carefully with machinery and equipment.

Training

- Training is usually on the job.
- You could gain SVQs in Food and Drink Operations (Fish and Shellfish Processing Skills) or (Meat and Poultry Skills) at SCQF Level 5.

- You might take short courses run by the [Food and Drink Training and Education Council](#).

Getting On

- With experience and qualifications you could go on to become a supervisor.
- You might progress to become a manager.
- You might be able to move into inspection work, for the [Food Standards Agency](#).

Contacts

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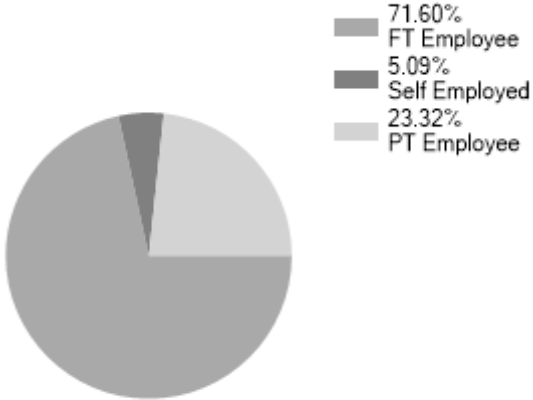
Website: www.craftbutchers.co.uk

X: [@ScoCraftButcher](#)

Facebook: www.facebook.com/scottishcraftbutchers

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

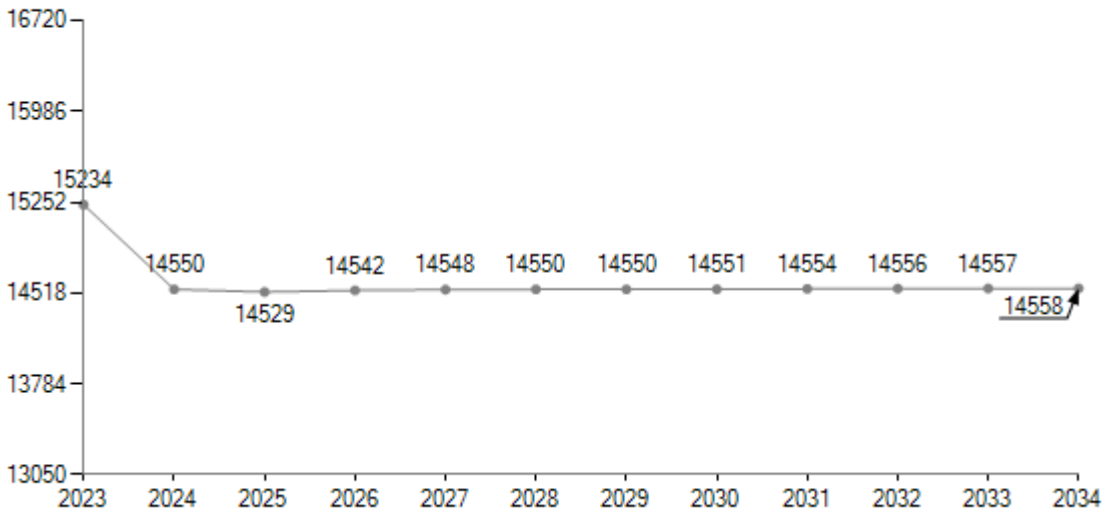


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)