Engineering Machine Operator

Engineering machine operators use equipment such as cutters, grinders and lathes to cut, shape, drill and finish metal and other materials to make parts used in engineering and manufacturing.

The Work

You could be:

- operating one or more machine tools, such as lathes, grinders, borers and injection moulding machines, which are pre-set to carry out certain tasks
- setting and operating machines
- switching the machines on and off and watching the controls while they are running
- adjusting controls and settings when necessary
- loading and unloading the machines
- cutting and shaping parts and tools
- checking the quality of what you are producing
- applying finishes and surface coatings to items
- ensuring strict health and safety rules are followed.

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.

The starting salary for engineering machine operators is around £15,000 a year. With experience this can rise to around £24,000 a year or more. Bonuses and extra pay for shift work are common.

Conditions

- You would work in a factory or machine shop.
- Working conditions can vary from clean and quiet to dirty and noisy depending on what you are making.
- You may have to do some heavy lifting.
- You have to take care to avoid accidents with machines.
- You would normally wear overalls and protective glasses, ear protectors, gloves and boots.
- You may have to work shifts and perhaps some overtime.

Getting In

- Employers' requirements vary from requiring no qualifications to having some subjects at National 4 or 5 including English, Maths and a relevant science or technological subject.
- You may have to sit an entry test to see how suitable you are for this type of work.

- General fitness is necessary for this job.

There are opportunities for engineering machine operators in a range of industries, such as aerospace, motor vehicles, office machinery and agricultural machinery. You will find jobs advertised on the internet, such as the Find a Job website and at your local Jobcentre Plus office.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- good with your hands
- good at understanding and following spoken and written instructions
- able to understand technical diagrams
- accurate and methodical
- careful and aware of health and safety regulations
- able to work alone or in a team.

You need to have:

- practical and technical ability
- computer skills to work with computer-controlled machines.

Training

- You would normally train on the job.
- You could study part time for an SVQ at SCQF Level 5.
- You may be able to do further on the job training to gain an SVQ at SCQF Level 6, combined with day release classes at college.
- You will probably continue to do on the job training as required, for instance to learn about new machines.

Getting On

- With experience you may be promoted to become a supervisor, foreman or forewoman.
- With more advanced training, you could become CNC Machinist or perhaps move up to engineering technician level.
- In some industries there may be opportunities to work abroad.

Contacts

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Statistics

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No statistics available for Scotland.

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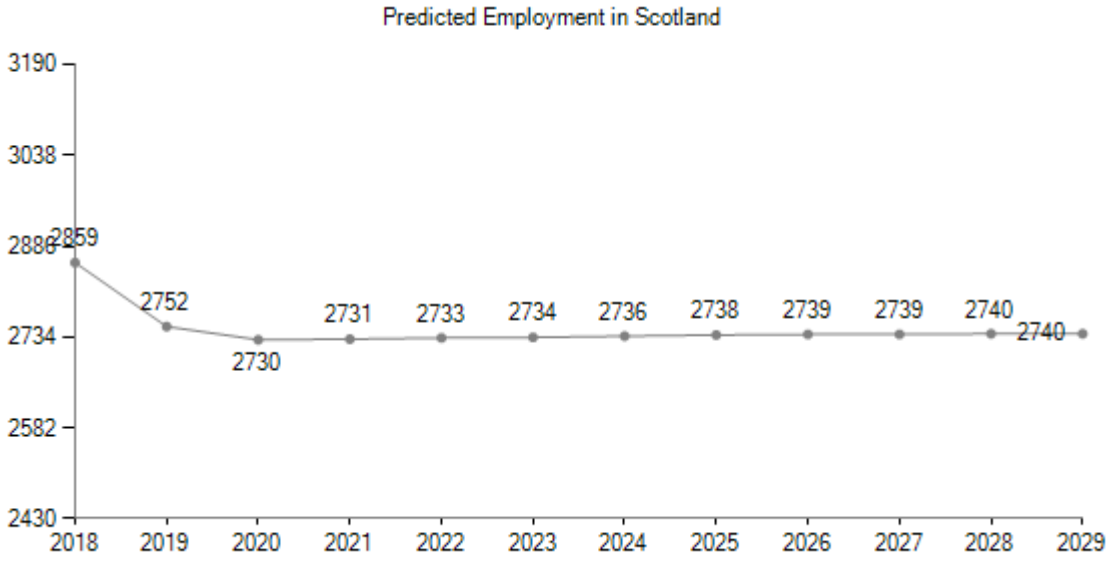

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