

Roustabout

Roustabouts are crew members on offshore oil or gas rigs. They do basic labouring work, mostly on the drilling operation. They keep the drilling area tidy and in good working order. They are also called roughnecks.

The Work

You could be:

- keeping work areas and decks clean and tidy
- scraping and painting areas when necessary
- carrying out basic repairs to equipment
- offloading supplies from boats and moving them into storage areas
- loading and stacking equipment using lifting gear
- doing general work in the pump room, for example helping to repair mud pumps
- assisting with the mixing of chemicals.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual salaries 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 roustabouts is normally in the range of £18,000 to £22,000 per year. (In addition, employers provide accommodation and food, as well as warm and waterproof clothing). With experience, this can rise to around £30,000 a year.

Conditions

- You would work on an oil or gas rig. You work outdoors in conditions that can be very cold, wet, windy, noisy and dangerous.
- There are risks of injury from accidents, especially if you are working at heights.
- You would normally work offshore for 2 or 3 weeks, followed by a 2 or 3 weeks' rest period onshore. This will mean spending long periods away from your home and family.
- There is often no mobile phone signal, but there are pay phones and usually internet access.
- Alcohol is banned on rigs, and there is random alcohol and drug testing.
- When offshore, you would normally work a 12-hour shift, including rest and meal breaks, with 12 hours off duty.
- Employers provide free accommodation and meals, and there are usually good recreational facilities. You would usually share a cabin with a colleague.
- You would wear protective and waterproof clothing. Employers provide all necessary safety equipment, such as thermal suits, gloves, boots and hard hat.
- You have to fly by helicopter between the rig or platform and onshore.

Getting In

- You do not need formal qualifications but a good general education is useful.
- Experience of any type of manual labour can be useful.
- You must be at least 18 years of age to work offshore.
- To work offshore, you must have the Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training Certificate (BOSIET). Many people do the course at their own expense before looking for work. In other cases, some companies sponsor new employees through the course.
- You must also have completed the OPITO Minimum Industry Safety Training (MIST) course and have an Offshore Medical Certificate.
- Normally, you need previous work experience in a manual or active job. For example, some entrants have experience of work in the construction industry or the armed forces.
- A forklift truck licence could be useful.
- You should be fit, as this job involves climbing, lifting and using heavy equipment.
- You would have to pass a medical examination every 2 years.

The UK oil and gas industry is located mainly off the east coast of Scotland and England. But there are also fields west of Shetland and in the Irish and North Seas. The employers in the industry include operating companies (usually oil companies) that hold exploration and production licences, drilling companies with contracts to do drilling work and a wide range of other major contractors and companies offering specialist technical services. The main recruitment contacts in Scotland are in the Aberdeen area.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- good practical skills
- stamina and good physical fitness
- agility and a good head for heights
- a strong sense of responsibility
- an awareness of health and safety issues at all times
- basic IT skills to record information
- a resilient nature.

You need to be able to:

- work outdoors in all weathers
- live on a rig or platform for long periods of time
- live and work as a member of a team
- observe regulations and follow instructions very carefully.

Training

- You may begin with induction training ashore, covering information on the industry and the company, health and safety and skills training including working at heights and using lifting equipment.

- You might undergo banksman slinger training to do crane and lifting work.
- You then do further on the job training offshore on the oil rig or platform.
- You may attend further short courses from time to time.
- You may be able to gain Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQs) in Offshore Deck Operations at SCQF Level 5.

Getting On

- After gaining sufficient experience, you may be able to gain promotion to the post of lead roustabout.
- You could then aim for promotion to higher skilled jobs such as derrickhand or driller, after around 5 years' experience.
- Many of the large companies in the oil and gas industry operate throughout the world, so you may be able to work overseas.

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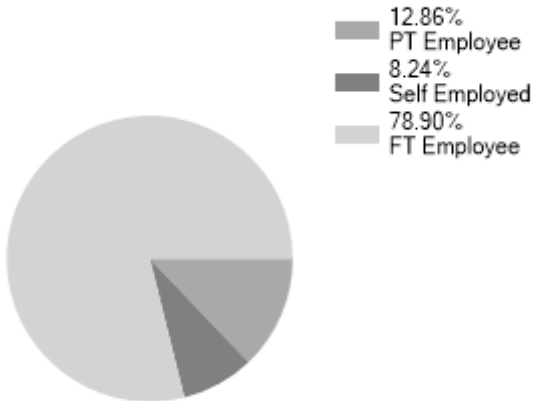
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

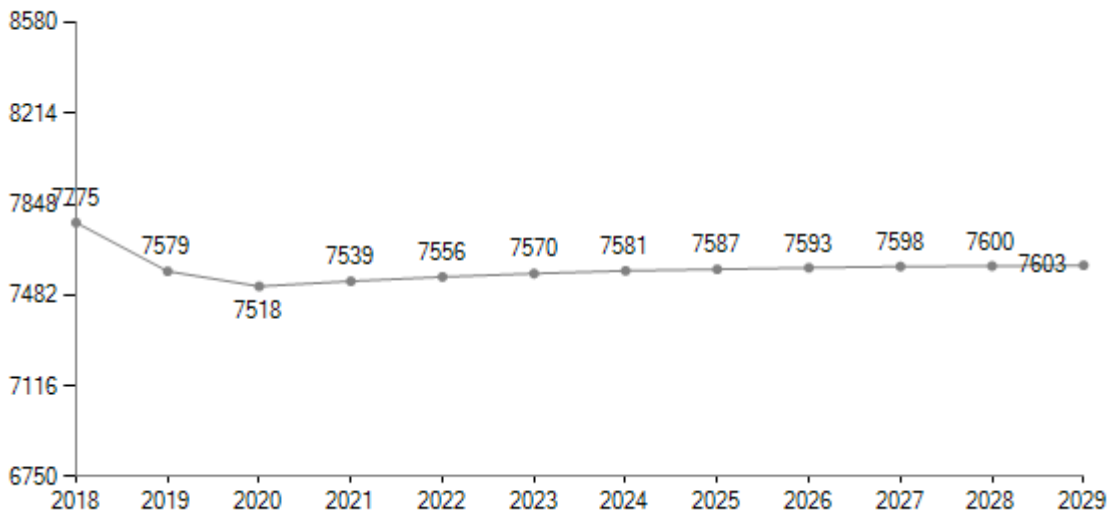


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)