

Health and Safety Officer

Health and safety officers ensure that the organisation they work for follows health and safety regulations to provide a safe work place. They aim to prevent injuries, accidents and health problems.

They are also known as safety officers or health and safety advisers.

The Work

You could be:

- doing risk assessments and audits, checking that machinery and equipment are safe and that management systems and working methods meet current legal standards
- explaining regulations in areas such as occupational health; noise, dust and fumes; fire safety and moving and storing dangerous materials, and making sure that everyone follows them
- identifying possible dangers and unsafe working methods and suggesting ways to tackle them
- working with managers, employees and trade unions to make policies and take action to encourage safe working practices and get rid of possible dangers
- consulting the Health and Safety Executive, local authorities and fire authorities, to check that premises meet current legal health and safety standards
- running training courses to encourage and promote safe working practices
- keeping a record of accidents or complaints, unsafe procedures or equipment and any action taken
- testing safety equipment and advising on its use
- investigating accidents and writing up reports, recommending improvements to prevent accidents happening again.

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.

Starting salaries for newly qualified safety officers are in the range of £25,000 to £34,000 a year. With experience this rises to between £30,000 and £60,000 a year. Jobs in some sectors such as the oil and gas industries are more highly paid.

Conditions

- You would work in an office, but also spend time in other working areas, carrying out risk assessments and routine inspections, and talking to staff.
- You might have to work outdoors, in a noisy or dirty environment, at heights, or in dangerous places.
- Working hours may be regular or you may have to work shifts, with periods on call.
- You might be able to work part time.

- Protective clothing may be required when carrying out risk assessments.

Getting In

- You normally need an HND (SCQF Level 8) or degree (SCQF Levels 9-11), usually in occupational safety and health, engineering, technology, building, physics or chemistry.
- Entry to a degree programme normally requires 4-5 Highers.
- The University of the West of Scotland offers a BSc Hons in Occupational Safety and Health. For entry you need 4 Highers at BBBC including 2 science subjects plus English and Maths at National 5.
- If you have a degree in another subject you can take a postgraduate course in risk, safety and health through distance learning.
- You should have experience in industry.
- Entry without a degree is possible if you have the relevant health and safety qualifications and some experience.
- For some entrants it is a second career, often after a job in which they have had some responsibility for safety.
- You might have to work at heights or in confined spaces.

There are jobs in local government, construction, engineering, manufacturing and the food, chemical and oil and gas industries.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- willing to keep up to date with changes in the law and technological changes
- observant
- able to explain scientific or technical information in simple terms
- confident enough to make unpopular decisions
- tactful and able to get on well with people from all backgrounds
- willing to consult others when necessary
- able to negotiate.

You should have:

- excellent written and spoken communication skills
- an enquiring mind
- sound judgement
- attention to detail
- a flexible approach to work.

Training

- Training is on the job.
- You will study for the NEBOSH Certificate and Diploma.
- You would then apply for membership of [Institution of Occupational Safety and Health \(IOSH\)](http://www.iosh.org). You would

join as an Affiliate member, then depending on qualifications and experience, you would be awarded Associate, Technician or Graduate membership, then work up to Chartered.

- You could also apply for full membership of the International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM).
- Alternatively you would work towards Scottish Vocational Qualifications (SVQ) while you are working: Occupational Health and Safety at SCQF Level 7 or Occupational Health and Safety Practice at SCQF Level 9.

Getting On

- You may start as a health and safety assistant, in a manufacturing company or local authority, and become a health and safety officer after gaining NEBOSH qualifications.
- With experience you could move on to be a supervisor or manager, or into a high level technical job.
- You could set up your own business as a consultant.

Contacts

British Safety Council (BSC)

Tel: 020 3510 8355

Website: www.britishsafetycouncil.co.uk

Twitter: @BritSafe

Facebook: www.facebook.com/britishsafetycouncil

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Website: careers.hse.gov.uk

Twitter: @H_S_E

Facebook: www.facebook.com/hsejob

Institution of Occupational Safety and Health (IOSH)

Tel: 0116 257 3100

Website: www.iosh.co.uk

Twitter: @IOSH_tweets

Facebook: www.facebook.com/IOSHofficial

International Institute of Risk and Safety Management (IIRSM)

Tel: 020 8741 9100

Email: info@iirsm.org

Website: www.iirsm.org

Twitter: @IIRSM

Facebook: www.facebook.com/IIRSM.Approved

SHP4Jobs

Tel: 0207 921 8345

Email: info@shp4jobs.co.uk

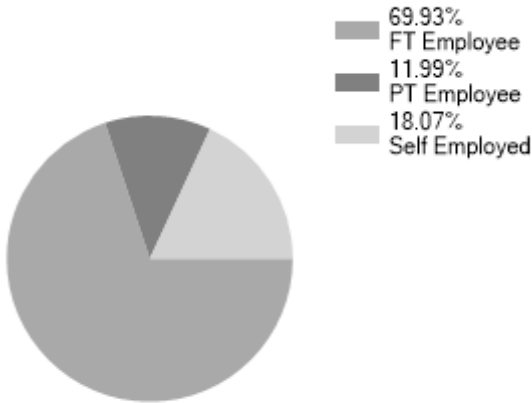
Website: www.shp4jobs.co.uk

Twitter: @SHPOnline

Facebook: www.facebook.com/SHPMag

Statistics

Employment Status UK %

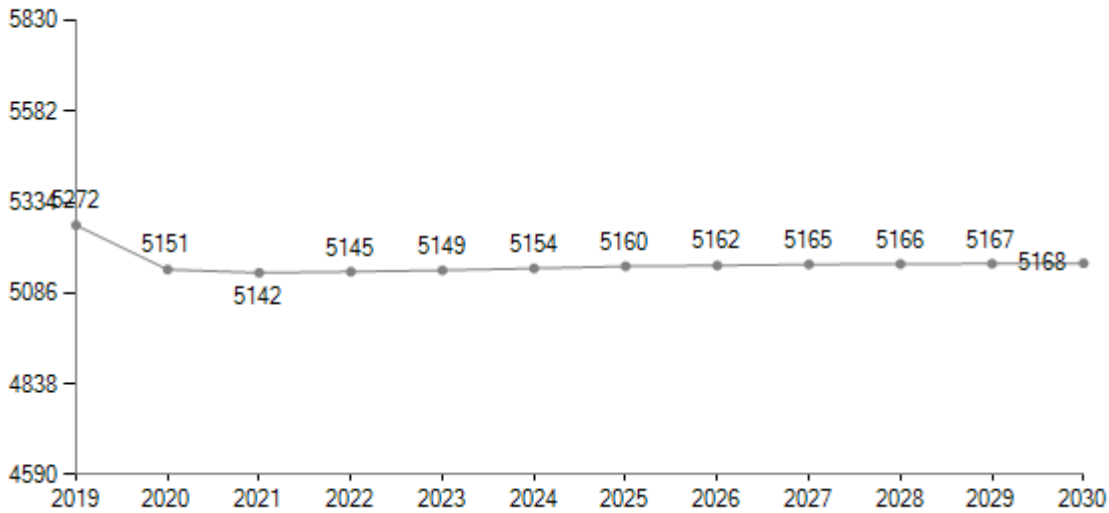


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)