

Clerk of Works

A clerk of works makes sure that construction work is carried out to agreed quality standards, specification and schedule, and that health and safety procedures are being followed. They are responsible either for several construction projects or for the long-term maintenance of several buildings.

They are also known as site inspectors.

The Work

You could be:

- reading the plans and written instructions, checking them and using as a reference when inspecting work
- inspecting the ongoing construction work, making sure it conforms to the plans and schedule as well as to legal requirements and that it is of good quality
- managing contractors ensuring they are following health and safety procedures and their work is on schedule
- taking measurements and samples to make sure work and materials meet specifications and quality standards
- suggesting or agreeing to minor changes in plans as long as this does not lead to additional costs
- writing a weekly report on the progress of work, numbers of workers and any events or visits
- supervising those workers on the site who work for your own employer and liaising with contractor's staff
- perhaps specialising in a particular field such as civil engineering or electrical installation
- supervising any major repairs or improvements being carried out on a building under your care.

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 salaries for clerks of works are around £25,000 a year. After experience this can rise to around £45,000 a year. Senior clerks of works can earn up to £60,000.

Some jobs may be on a contract basis, for a certain number of weeks or months, and pay an hourly rate between around £20 to £35.

Conditions

- You normally work 35 to 40 hours a week, Monday to Friday.
- You may have to work some evenings and weekends to meet deadlines.
- You might be based in a temporary office on a building site or at the main offices of the company you work for, but would spend a lot of your time outdoors in all weather conditions.

- You might travel around to a number of different sites.
- You may have to climb scaffolding and crawl underground.
- You would wear protective gear when on site, including hard hat, overalls and safety shoes.

Getting In

- There is no set entry route. Experience is essential meaning this is not suitable for school leavers.
- Many clerks of works enter the profession after several years' experience at craft or technician level. An apprenticeship with a construction company is good way to get into the industry.
- You need to hold a Construction Skills Certification Scheme (CSCS) card or equivalent to work on sites.
- You need good knowledge of, and sometimes a qualification in, health and safety.
- You could do the SVQ in Construction Site Supervision (Construction): Building and Civil Engineering at (SCQF Level 7), or a relevant HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8). In some cases a relevant degree (SCQF Levels 9-10) is required.
- A driving licence is preferred and may be necessary.

Most jobs are with big employers such as local authorities, housing associations, government departments, hospitals, universities, airports or industrial plants.

What Does It Take

You need:

- good observation and attention to detail
- sound judgement
- a good knowledge of the construction industry and building regulations
- broad technical skills
- problem solving skills
- assertiveness
- diplomacy and the ability to remain calm under pressure
- good persuasion and negotiating skills
- the ability to organise your workload and meet deadlines.

Training

- Training is on the job.
- You can study the SVQ at SCQF Level 7 while you are working.
- Employers often want entrants to be members of the [Institute of Clerks of Works and Construction Inspectorate](#) (ICWCI). The ICWCI website has details of membership requirements.
- [The Construction Industry Training Board](#) (CITB) runs a Site Management Safety Training Scheme (SMSTS) for site managers and supervisors.
- You might complete the NC in Construction Health and Safety from the National Examination Board in Occupational Health and Safety (NEBOSH).

Getting On

- You would be expected to keep up to date with changes in the construction industry and legislation through continuing professional development (CPD).
- There is little direct promotion. However, you can move on to bigger projects.
- Some clerks of works move on to site management or another management role in construction.
- You may be able to get work abroad, in Europe or in developing countries.

Contacts

GoConstruct

Website: www.goconstruct.org

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Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.