

Water or Waste Water Treatment Operative

A water or waste water treatment operative runs the systems which provide fresh water supplies and treat sewage and other waste water.

The Work

As a **water treatment operative** you could be:

- working the pumps to adjust the level of water flowing through the pipes
- checking the level of acid and bacteria on a computer screen
- cleaning and carrying out maintenance on tanks and filters
- taking samples and checking water and gas levels
- adding chemicals to treat water
- inspecting the reservoirs and outlets to check, for example, if the level of rainfall has affected them
- reporting any major faults to the engineers
- keeping accurate records of water quality
- carrying out general grounds maintenance and repair work.

As a **waste water treatment operative** you could be:

- using electric scrapers to separate sludge (solid material) from effluent water
- working machinery to thicken the sludge and to produce gas to generate electricity to run the works
- encouraging bacterial processes which convert sewage into clean water.

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.

The salary for apprentices with Scottish Water is currently £19,587 a year. Once qualified, salaries rise to between £21,053 and £28,425 a year (2023). They may earn extra through overtime.

In other companies operatives can earn around £20,000 a year, rising to £35,000 a year or more for operatives with several years' experience.

Conditions

- At the water or sewage treatment plant it may be wet, smelly or dirty.
- You will probably work shifts, including weekends and evenings, and be on a rota for out of hours service.
- You might have to lift heavy equipment.
- You will have to bend, climb ladders and work in confined spaces.

- You will wear protective clothing and occasionally breathing equipment.
- You might sometimes be outdoors as well as indoors.
- There is a risk of exposure to chemicals and skin irritants.

Getting In

- You do not need any formal qualifications, but a good general education is useful.
- You might enter through a Scottish Water Technical: Water Industry Modern Apprenticeship.
- For entry to the Scottish Water four year Technical Apprenticeship you usually need at least five subjects at National 4 or 5, preferably including English, Maths and science subject.
- You may need a driving licence or be working towards one.
- There is no age restriction for entry, but if you have to operate machinery you must be over 18.

Apply for jobs with Scottish Water.

What Does It Take

You need:

- the confidence to work alone
- strong problem solving skills
- good verbal and written communication skills
- the ability to organise and prioritise your work
- health and safety awareness
- the ability to follow strict procedures
- accuracy and good observation skills
- IT skills.

Training

- Training is mainly on the job.
- The Scottish Water Modern Apprenticeship leads to a relevant SVQ at SCQF Level 6.
- You could train on the job and attend college on a day release basis.

Getting On

- There are good opportunities later for progress into technician or incorporated engineer level work, or into promoted posts as a supervisor, a water inspector, an area superintendent or controller or a trainer for new staff.

More Information

For more information please see the [Energy and Utilities Skills](#) website.

Contacts

Scottish Water

Website: www.scottishwater.co.uk

X: [@scottish_water](https://twitter.com/scottish_water)

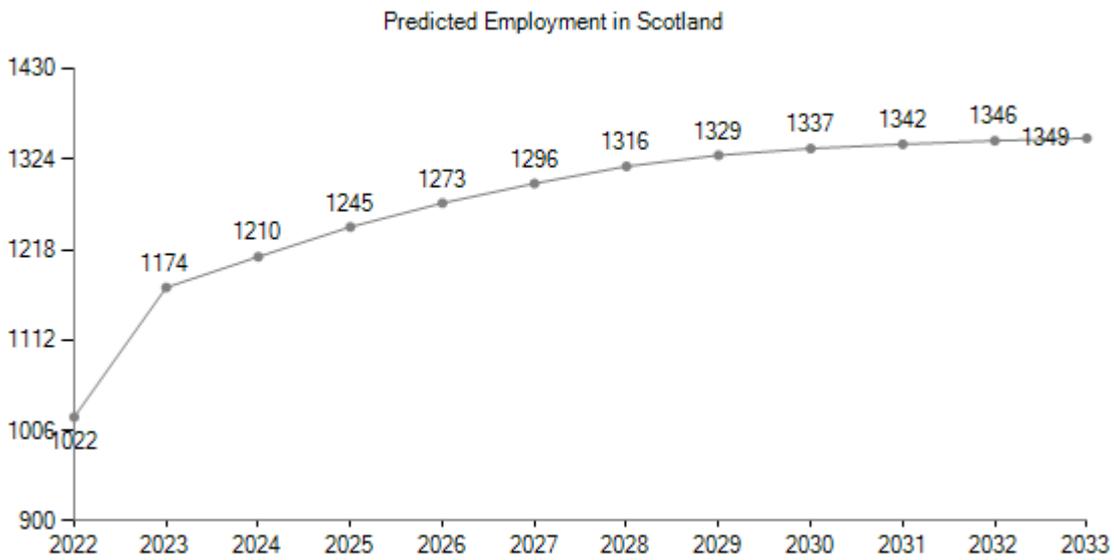
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Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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