

Decontamination Technician

Decontamination technicians work in teams that decontaminate reusable medical equipment to make sure they are returned to the users in a sterile condition for reuse on patients in theatres, wards and clinics. They work in different areas of a decontamination unit including the wash room, packing room and sterilisation room.

The Work

You could be:

- receiving used medical equipment and logging each item into a computer system
- taking apart complex medical equipment to prepare for decontamination and putting back together once complete
- carrying out processes such as soaking, flushing and manual washing
- operating specialist decontamination equipment such as multi-irrigation systems, washer disinfectors and sterilisers
- recording and reporting to supervisors any issues, such as incorrect quantities of items or repairs required
- assembling equipment into packs or trays ready for labelling and distribution
- ensuring that you follow strict procedures throughout the whole decontamination process.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- whether you are on NHS pay rates
- whether you work shifts.

Sterile services technicians are on the Agenda for Change pay scale. The current pay scales are from April 2025. They start on Band 2, £25,694 to £27,900 a year and after experience move up to Band 3, £28,011 to £30,230 a year. Supervisors are on Band 4, £30,353 to £33,016 a year.

Conditions

- You work in the sterile services or decontamination department of a hospital.
- In most hospitals there are shifts around the clock and you will work some weekends.
- You come into contact with contaminated equipment and dangerous sharps.
- You are in a sterile environment and are in contact with powerful chemicals, so you wear a face mask and head covering as well as surgical gloves, gown and shoes.
- This is an active job and you have to lift and carry heavy objects.
- Work gets hectic if you have to urgently prepare a particular set of equipment.

Getting In

- You would apply for a trainee decontamination technician post with the NHS.
- You require a good standard of general education, such as some subjects at National 5, including English

and Maths. Science subjects may be an advantage.

- Experience in healthcare is useful.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are suitable for this type of work. Contact Disclosure Scotland for details on the type you would need.
- A driving licence is useful when working late or early shifts.

Most jobs are in the National Health Service (NHS), but there are also jobs in private or military hospitals. Vacancies appear within hospitals and in newspapers.

What Does It Take

You should be:

- responsible when it comes to health, safety and hygiene
- observant, with a keen eye for detail
- practical with good manual dexterity
- able to follow instructions and procedures
- good at communicating verbally and in writing
- able to work quickly and accurately
- interested in science and patient care
- able to work as part of a team
- able to work under pressure.

Training

- You start the Institute of Decontamination Sciences (IDSc) training programme as soon as you start the trainee post.
- You train with colleagues and a mentor.
- You will learn the skills and knowledge required for working in each area of the unit.
- Once you've completed the training, which usually takes 12 months, you'll take the IDSc Technical Certificate exam.
- Once fully qualified, you can apply to join the IDSc.

Getting On

- With further training, you could progress into supervisory or managerial posts.
- You could move into working in the operating theatre as a healthcare assistant or an operating department practitioner or technician.
- You need to keep up to date with new equipment and technologies.

Contacts

Institute of Decontamination Sciences

Tel: 02039 598369

Email: admin@idsc-uk.co.uk

Website: www.idsc-uk.co.uk

X: @IDScuk

Facebook: www.facebook.com/idscuk

NHS Scotland Careers

Website: www.careers.nhs.scot

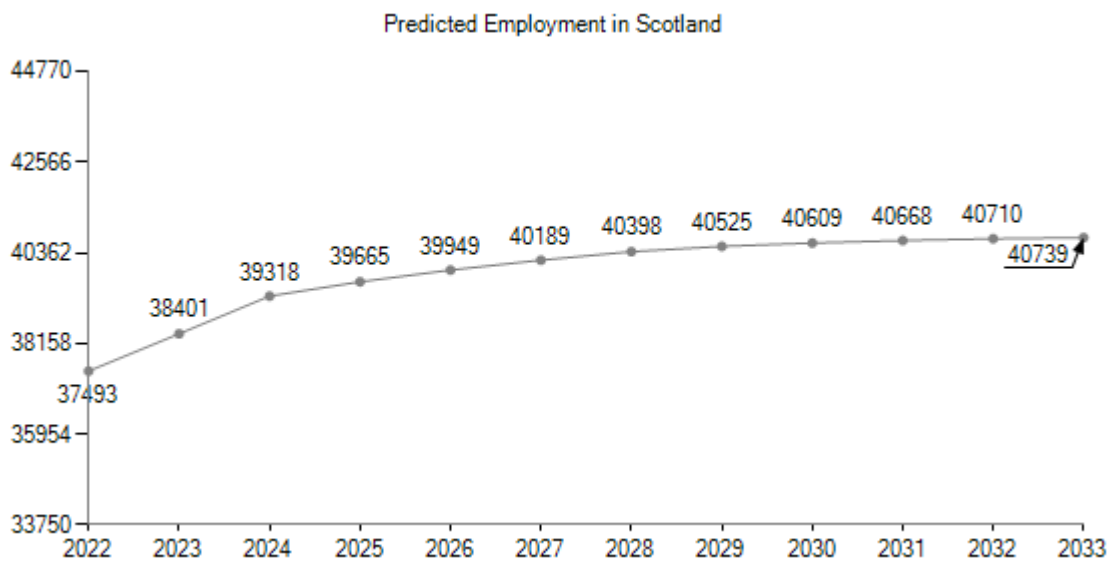
Website (2): jobs.scot.nhs.uk

Statistics

Employment Status : Not available this career.

Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.



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