

## Forest Worker

Forest workers do a range of practical work to help develop, maintain and protect forests. They plant, trim, thin and fell trees and protect them from pests, diseases and harmful wildlife. Within the Forestry Commission they are also called forest craftsperson or specific titles such as harvester or tractor driver.

### The Work

You could be:

- using a special plough to prepare ground and planting young trees
- clearing scrub and weeds so that young trees can grow
- spraying young trees with fertiliser or insecticides and protecting the forest against disease and pests
- thinning densely wooded areas, cutting down trees or removing their branches
- loading felled timber for transport
- erecting and mending fences, digging ditches and making roadways
- maintaining fire equipment and sometimes fighting fires
- using heavy machinery such as tractors and harvesters, power tools such as chainsaws and hand tools such as axes and billhooks
- carrying out site risk assessments and ensuring all work complies with health and safety rules.

### 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.

Pay rates for new entrants to the job of forest worker in Scotland vary. In the Forestry Commission, a skilled forest worker is paid on band 6b which ranges from £19,995 to £21,175. This can rise with experience and promotion to band 6a. You may get lodgings as part of your job.

### Conditions

- You would normally work 37 hours a week, but at certain times overtime will be required, including evenings and weekends.
- The work is almost all outdoors.
- Working conditions can be wet, cold, windy and muddy.
- You may have to walk long distances and do a lot of bending and lifting.
- You may have to climb trees, using safety equipment.
- You would wear protective clothing such as boots, hard hat, gloves and ear defenders.
- You may have to live in the country, sometimes in a remote area.

## Getting In

- A good general education is useful. In addition, subjects at National 4 or 5 in English, Maths and a science subject may be helpful.
- You may get in through a two-year Modern Apprenticeship. The Forestry Commission usually requires subjects at National 5, including English and Maths, for entry to their Modern Apprenticeship.
- They also expect apprentices to hold, or plan to hold, a full driving licence within six months of their start date.
- Scotland's Rural College (SRUC) offers a Certificate in Forestry (SCQF Level 5) at the Barony Campus. Entry requirements are 3 subjects at National 4 including English and Maths, and preferably a science subject at National 5.
- Inverness College also offer a Forestry Certificate. Entry requirements are 3 subjects at National 4.
- Previous work experience on the land is useful. You could consider doing voluntary work with organisations like the National Trust for Scotland, the Woodland Trust or The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) Scotland.
- You need to be fit as there is a lot of lifting, carrying, digging, bending and other physical work.
- You may be expected to obtain a UK driving licence.

You could work for the Forestry Commission, a forestry company or private estate, a forestry consultancy or contractor, a local authority, a government agency or a conservation organisation.

## What Does It Take

You need to be:

- interested in looking after the environment
- keen to work outdoors
- practical and have good hand skills
- agile and have a good head for heights
- fit and strong
- observant, to spot signs of disease in trees
- able to follow instructions
- aware of health and safety rules when climbing and using equipment
- able to work on your own as well as part of a team.

## Training

- Training is normally on the job through an employer's training scheme.
- You may also do a part time college course to get a Scottish Vocational Qualification (SVQ).
- There is a Modern Apprenticeship in Trees and Timber at SCQF Level 5.
- The Forestry Commission also offers a two-year Modern Apprenticeship in Trees and Timber at SCQF Level 6, specialising in either harvesting or forest establishment.
- You may do short practical courses in operating and maintaining specialist equipment, and in health and safety topics.

## Getting On

- With experience, you could apply for a supervisory job, with responsibility for other workers.
- You may be able to become a forest ranger, helping to conserve wildlife in the forest.
- You may eventually be able to set up your own business as a contractor.
- If you take advanced qualifications, you may be able to move up to forest officer level.

## More Information

Forestry Commission Scotland is the biggest employer of forest workers in Scotland. They recruit for their apprenticeships at different times throughout the year depending on where and when an opportunity comes up.

Vacancies are posted on the [Civil Service Jobs](#) website and on the [Forestry Commission Careers](#) Facebook page.

## Contacts

### Conservation Volunteers

Tel: 01786 479 697

Email: [scotland@tcv.org.uk](mailto:scotland@tcv.org.uk)

Website: [www.tcv.org.uk/scotland](http://www.tcv.org.uk/scotland)

Twitter: @TCVtweets

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/TheConservationVolunteers](http://www.facebook.com/TheConservationVolunteers)

### Forestry Commission Scotland

Tel: 0300 067 6156

Email: [fcscotland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:fcscotland@forestry.gsi.gov.uk)

Website: [scotland.forestry.gov.uk](http://scotland.forestry.gov.uk)

Twitter: @fcscotland

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/ForestryCommissionScotland](http://www.facebook.com/ForestryCommissionScotland)

### Lantra Scotland

Tel: 01738 310164

Email: [scotland@lantra.co.uk](mailto:scotland@lantra.co.uk)

Website: [www.scotland.lantra.co.uk](http://www.scotland.lantra.co.uk)

Twitter: @LantraScotland

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/lantrascotland](http://www.facebook.com/lantrascotland)

### National Trust for Scotland (NTS)

Tel: 0131 458 0200

Website: [www.nts.org.uk](http://www.nts.org.uk)

Twitter: @N\_T\_S

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforScotland](http://www.facebook.com/NationalTrustforScotland)

### Royal Forestry Society (RFS)

Tel: 01295 678588

Email: [rfshq@rfs.org.uk](mailto:rfshq@rfs.org.uk)

Website: [www.rfs.org.uk](http://www.rfs.org.uk)

Twitter: @royal\_forestry

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/RoyalForestrySociety](http://www.facebook.com/RoyalForestrySociety)

### Royal Scottish Forestry Society (RSFS)

Website: [www.rsfs.org.uk](http://www.rsfs.org.uk)

Twitter: @RSFS1854

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/Royal-Scottish-Forestry-Society-1629037513991659](http://www.facebook.com/Royal-Scottish-Forestry-Society-1629037513991659)

### Woodland Trust Scotland

Tel: 01738 635544

Email: [scotland@woodlandtrust.org.uk](mailto:scotland@woodlandtrust.org.uk)

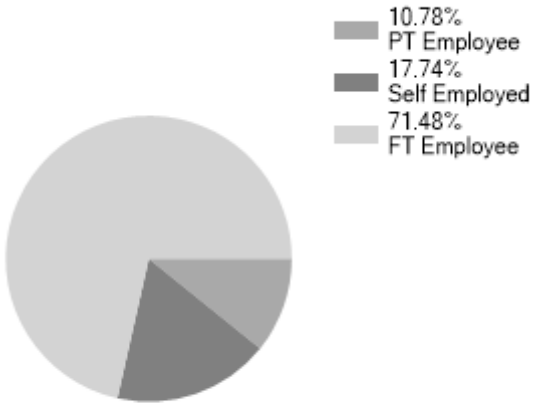
Website: [www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

Twitter: @WoodlandTrust

Facebook: [www.facebook.com/thewoodlandtrust](http://www.facebook.com/thewoodlandtrust)

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



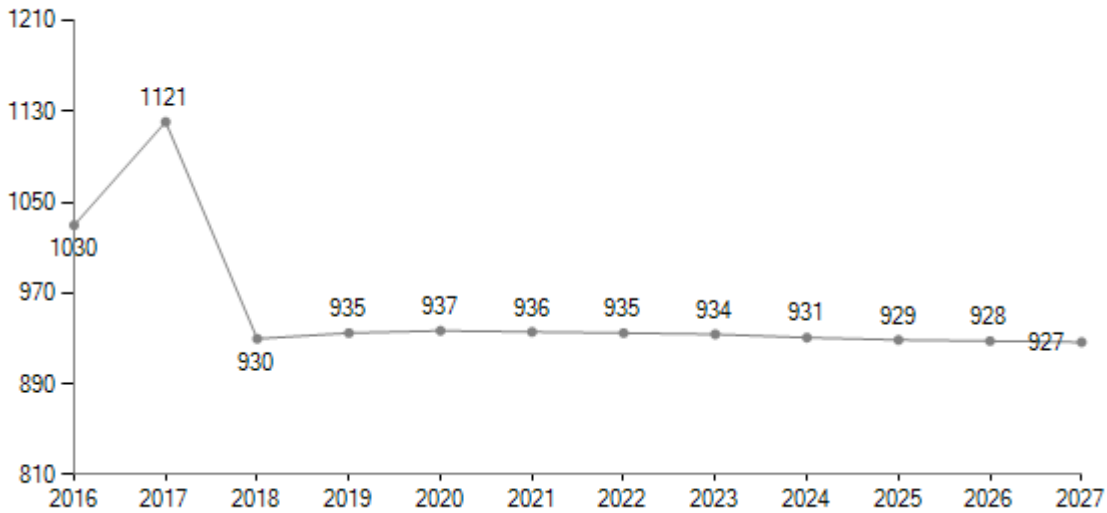
Past Unemployment - Scotland

Date	Unemployed
Dec 2016	3.74%
Sep 2018	1.84%
Dec 2018	1.27%
Mar 2019	0.96%

LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [EMSI UK](#)