

ROV Pilot Technician

A remotely operated vehicle, or ROV, is a small submersible craft which performs various underwater tasks in support of a wide range of industries, including oil and gas, scientific exploration, search and salvage, inspection of underwater equipment such as pipelines, surveying and dam inspections.

An ROV pilot technician controls the movement of the vehicle from a ship's cabin or other indoor location on the surface.

The Work

You could be:

- launching and 'flying' your vehicle by remote control from the surface of the water to depths of up to 165 metres (some ROVs can dive up to 4000 metres)
- operating equipment such as cameras and interpreting data, sometimes in poor visibility, from video or sonar displays to calculate and keep track of the position of your vehicle
- navigating the ROV's route, avoiding hazards such as moving parts of the ship
- operating robotic arms (if your vehicle has them), to perform simple tasks such as picking up items from the seabed
- judging the changing weather conditions, if necessary altering the dive programme at short notice
- relaying information during the dive, verbally using video equipment and computer
- regularly maintaining the ROV and its associated equipment and carrying out repairs on location
- carrying out technical tasks: for example, rigging and operating small boats and basic electronic and hydraulic construction
- writing technical reports and ordering spare parts.

Pay

Some large ROV companies employ staff on a full time basis, offering an annual salary. Others contract staff on a 'day-rate' basis, paying separately for each job. The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on:

- the demand for the job
- how many days you work.

Typical annual salaries vary depending on experience and contacts. Salaries can range from £35,000 for a trainee up to £100,000 or more for an experienced supervisor. Day rates vary from around £250 to £700 a day.

Some large companies employ full time technicians, but many employ others on a daily rate.

Conditions

- Shifts offshore can be up to 12 hours long. Onshore you might spend periods on call.
- When operating the ROV you are usually indoors, in a warm, clean environment. This could be a marine

laboratory, control cabin of an offshore ROV ship or diver support vehicle.

- When repairing or maintaining the ROV, you work outdoors in all weathers on the deck of the ship.
- When working outdoors, you wear cold weather gear such as thermal boiler suits.
- There can be some heavy lifting.

Getting In

There is no one single route into becoming a ROV pilot technician.

- The most usual route today would be to study for an HNC (SCQF Level 7), HND (SCQF Level 8) or degree (SCQF Level 9-10) in either mechanical, electrical or electronic engineering.
- The entry requirements for these courses vary. For HNC and HND courses you would need 1-3 Highers plus some subjects at National 5. Degree courses require 4-5 Highers. The subjects which colleges and universities ask for normally include English, Maths and science or technological subjects.
- Some enter by way of the Royal Navy, the Merchant Navy or the RAF, after training in navigation, marine engineering or aircraft engineering.
- A minimum of three years' experience working in electrical, electronics, hydraulics or mechanics may be necessary.
- To work offshore you must pass a medical examination every 2 years.
- You must also pass an offshore survival course such as the Basic Offshore Safety Induction and Emergency Training Certificate (BOSIET). Contact Cogent for more details.
- You may have to undertake the Minimum Industry Safety Training (MIST) course.

As well as the oil and gas industries, ROV pilot technicians find work in civil engineering, the defence and security industry, environmental sciences and marine archaeology.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- analytical and problem solving skills
- an aptitude for technical and practical work
- good IT and number skills
- the ability to use tools
- the ability to interpret complex data and technical drawings
- excellent attention to detail
- the ability to work either alone or in a team
- good verbal and written communication skills.

You should also:

- be able to understand engineering ideas
- have a responsible attitude to health and safety
- be able to work well under pressure.

Training

- Although there are no formal qualifications specific to ROV operations, there are a number of courses where you can learn the basics to comply with industry standards.
- An employer may sponsor you through the course.
- Larger ROV employers may provide in-house training specific to their organisation.
- After training you would start of as a base technician.

Getting On

- After some experience as a base technician, you can move on to an offshore role on a smaller ROV or become a junior member of an 8-person team working with a larger ROV.
- Eventually you could become an ROV supervisor or an operations manager, particularly if you have a relevant HND or degree.
- As well as the vacancies in the Scottish sector of the North Sea, there are opportunities to work abroad – in Norway, the Middle East, Asia, South America, Africa, Australasia and China.

Contacts

Cogent

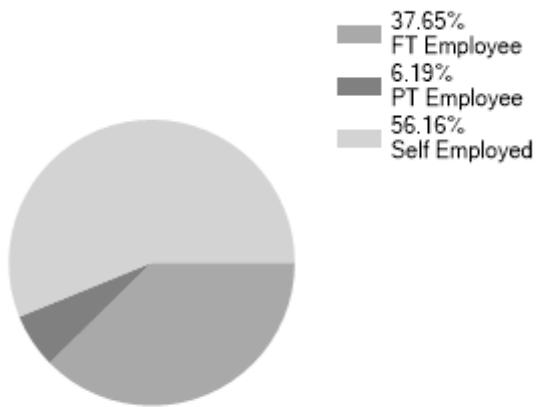
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Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB)

Website: www.ecitb.org.uk
X: [@ECITB_Skills](https://twitter.com/ECITB_Skills)
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Statistics

Employment Status UK %

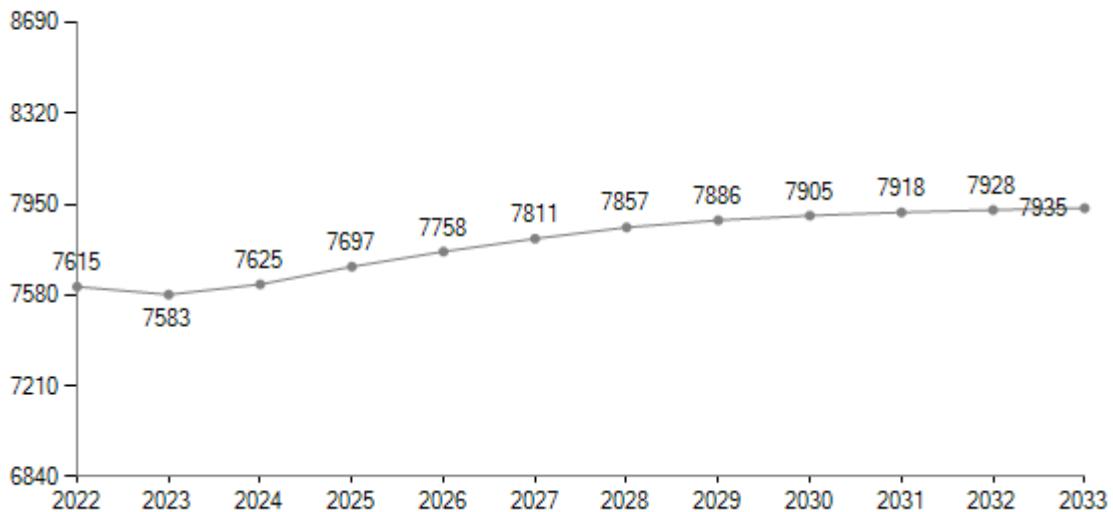


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)