

Signaller

Signallers control the movement and direction of trains by operating railway signals and points. They make sure that trains run safely and on time.

The Work

You could be:

- testing the signalling equipment to make sure it is working properly
- checking whether there are any disruptions to the train schedule, such as engineering works or incidents
- setting a route for each train, taking into account speed restrictions, timetables and number of trains running
- passing this information to other control rooms, signal boxes and level crossing guards to make sure trains move from one route section to the next safely
- communicating with train drivers and track workers, by telephone or radio, about any problems or access requirements
- using manual or computerised systems to set and lock track points to direct the trains
- using manual or computerised systems to change signals for the driver to follow
- monitoring train movements and data on a number of computer screens
- dealing with unexpected incidents and completing reports.

Pay

The figures below are only a guide. Actual pay rates may vary, depending on the type and size of signal equipment you work on, and level of experience.

Signallers pay is graded from 1 to 9, based on increasing experience and responsibility. Entry level pay starts at around £26,000 a year, with interim grades rising to between £35,000 and £40,000. Senior level signallers earn up to over £48,000 a year.

You usually also earn shift allowance and possibly public holiday pay and overtime, especially working Sundays. You can typically add £10,000 a year for standard extras.

Conditions

- You may work in a small signal box next to a track or in a large control room away from the tracks.
- Shifts can vary between 8 and 12 hours, depending on location.
- You may be working alone or with a team of other signallers.
- You may spend a lot of time in front of computer screens.
- You would have to work shifts, including evenings, nights, public holidays and weekends.
- The work may be mentally exhausting.

Getting In

- A good general education is useful and you are likely to need at least English and Maths at National 5.
- You complete the initial application online and if successful, you complete some online tests. If you meet the benchmark, you have an interview.
- You must be at least 18 years old.
- You have to pass a medical examination and alcohol and drug tests.
- You need to be physically fit, with good eyesight, satisfactory colour vision and good hearing.
- 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.
- You will undergo regular drug and alcohol tests to make sure you are not under any influence during working hours – Network Rail have a zero tolerance policy.
- A driving licence may be necessary in order to get to work at any time of day or night.

Employment is with Network Rail, which is responsible for maintaining around 3,000 miles of track and related infrastructure in Scotland.

What Does It Take

You need to be:

- observant and thorough
- responsible
- able to remain calm under pressure
- able to analyse situations and make decisions
- aware of the importance of health and safety
- able to understand and follow rules and regulations
- able to concentrate for long periods.

You need to have:

- good communication skills
- IT and numeracy skills
- the ability to work as part of a team as well as alone
- the ability to carry out more than one task at once.

Training

- You will undertake the Network Rail Signaller Apprenticeship Programme which lasts 18 months, leading to the Level 3 Operations Apprenticeship.
- Training includes Initial signalling training, Station operations placement, and Incident management and response (parts 1 and 2).
- You have to pass exams to progress to a full time position.
- Throughout your career you are continuously assessed to ensure that your knowledge and skills are up to standard.

Getting On

- After some experience with less complex systems, you may undergo training to move into a highly technical control centre, controlling more trains.
- After a few years' experience, you may be able to gain promotion to supervisor or manager, leading a team of signallers.

More Information

Network Rail are in the process of replacing their signalling system to the European Train Control System (ETCS) and Traffic Management (TM) Programme. This may affect signaller jobs in the future as all signalling will be done out of Rail Operating Centres (ROCs).

Contacts

Network Rail

Tel: 020 7557 8000

Website: www.networkrail.co.uk

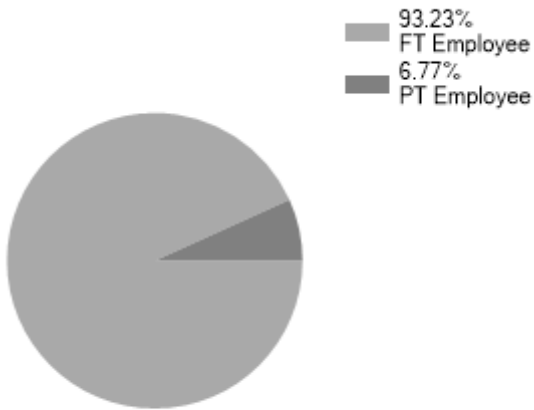
Website (2): www.networkrail.co.uk/careers

Twitter: @networkrailJOBS

Facebook: www.facebook.com/networkrailcareers

Statistics

Employment Status UK %



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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

Predicted Employment Statistics : Not available this career.