

Port Operative

Port operatives are based in small or large ports and harbours and carry out a range of tasks involving handling cargo, passengers or marine craft. This can involve operating equipment and driving vehicles.

The Work

There are three main areas that come under the term port operative:

- stevedoring – transferring cargo between ship and shore
- marine operations – working on marine craft and assisting with movements
- passenger operations – assisting the movement of passengers to and from vessels such as ferries and cruise ships.

As a stevedore you could be:

- loading or unloading cargo using cranes, conveyor belts or pipes
- positioning and securing containers on freight ships
- using forklift trucks, electric trolleys or other machinery to move cargo to storage areas on shore
- tying and untying the ships' ropes when arriving and leaving port
- maintaining equipment and machinery.

As a marine operative you could be:

- moving buoys and markers in and out of the water
- fuelling vessels
- operating vessels and using radio and radar systems, usually under supervision
- transporting passengers and crew from shore to ship.

As a passenger operative you could be:

- loading and unloading baggage to and from the ship
- directing vehicles and assisting passengers getting on and off the ship
- checking travel documents
- providing travel information on sailing times, weather and local facilities.

Pay

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

- where you work
- the size of the company or organisation you work for
- the demand for the job.

The starting salary for port operatives is usually around £25,000 a year. This can rise up to around £30,000 or

more with experience.

Conditions

- Stevedore and marine operation duties are outdoors, in all weathers, and indoors in ship cargo holds and storage areas onshore.
- Work can be physically demanding and you may have to work at heights.
- Passenger operative duties can be outdoors and in a harbour or port office.
- In all cases, you would work shifts, including early mornings, evenings and weekends, and you may be on call.

Getting In

- Formal qualifications are not usually required, but a good level of general education is useful.
- You could get in through a Modern Apprenticeship in Maritime Occupations: Port Operations at SCQF Level 5.
- A driving licence may be useful or even necessary, depending on your specific role.
- Due to some restrictions on the operation of equipment, you may need to be 18 years old before undertaking stevedore or marine operation duties.
- Depending on your role, you may need to have a medical.

What Does It Take

You need:

- good communication skills
- good teamworking skills
- a reasonable level of fitness
- customer service skills, especially working as a passenger operative
- good practical skills
- an awareness of health and safety procedures
- the ability to follow instructions and explain them to others
- to be willing to work flexibly.

Training

- Training lasts around 15 months and involves both on the job and off the job training.
- You would study for SVQ Port Operations at SCQF Level 5.
- You might undertake additional courses that include health and safety awareness and first aid.
- Depending on your duties, you may undergo training for the operation of forklift trucks, cranes and other equipment.

Getting On

- With experience and qualifications you could become a supervisor.
- You could do the SVQ Supervision Port Operations at SCQF Level 6 to help you progress.

- You might move into port operations management.

Contacts

Maritime Skills Alliance

Website: www.maritimeskills.org

Port Skills and Safety

Tel: 020 7260 1790

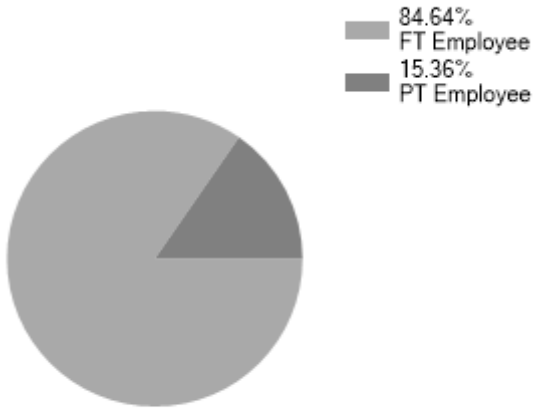
Email: info@portskillsandsafety.co.uk

Website: www.portskillsandsafety.co.uk

Twitter: [@saferports](https://twitter.com/saferports)

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.