Technical Support Engineer (Onshore/Offshore)

Technical support engineers (onshore/offshore) use specialist tools to isolate pipelines for oil and gas companies who need sections of their pipeline infrastructure repaired or maintained. Once the pipe is isolated, the oil or gas company can work on the pipe without having to drain the whole pipeline. They can also be known as remote systems technicians.

The Work

You could be:

- using specialist equipment such as pipe wall communication systems (remote control devices which locate where tools are inside a pipe) and Tecno Plugs (remotely controlled isolation plug tools)
- meeting with the client company's representatives during assembly and testing of equipment
- using the pipe wall communication system to push (or 'pig') the remote isolation plug into the pipe that needs isolating
- making sure the remote isolation plug is positioned just beyond the part of the pipe that needs repaired; for example, this could be a faulty emergency shut down valve (ESDV) that is worn and needs to be removed
- once in position, remotely controlling the isolation plug to block off that part of the pipeline, so that the client can safely drain the oil from the other side of the isolated part of the pipeline to carry out repairs
- retrieving the remote isolation plug using the same methods once the pipe has been isolated
- fault finding and repairing hydraulic systems
- managing stock control and doing general workshop duties.

Pay

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

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

Salaries might start at between £28,000 and £35,000 rising to around £50,000 or more for an experienced supervisor. Day rates vary from around £250 to £700 a day.

Conditions

- You can be working in workshops, oil rigs or platforms onshore or offshore.
- Onshore hours are mostly regular, Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 5.00pm, but you might occasionally work evenings and weekends.
- Offshore working hours are normally 12-hour shifts, including nights, and you can spend one or two weeks there at a time.
- You would be working in potentially dangerous environments, such as low or high pressure steam line environments which can potentially explosive, or in extreme temperatures.

- You would wear protective clothing and safety equipment such as gloves, boots and a hard hat.
- You have to fly by helicopter between the rig or platform and onshore.
- When offshore, you would live in shared accommodation and meals are provided.
- You may do a lot of travelling all over the world, as you have to go where the project is. Companies often operate at a global level.

Getting In

- Employers normally look for applicants with an NC (SCQF Levels 4-6), HNC (SCQF Level 7) or HND (SCQF Level 8) in mechanical engineering or a related subject such as mechatronics.
- For entry to an NC course, you normally need 2 subjects at National 5 including Maths or a science or technological subject. HNC or HND courses usually require 1-2 Highers plus some subjects at National 5.
- Studying for a Modern Apprenticeship in Engineering at SCQF Level 6 is also a way to gain entry.
- Alternatively, you can get in if you have previously worked in a mechanical engineering related role.
- 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).
- You may also have to undertake the Minimum Industry Safety Training (MIST) course.
- A forklift truck licence may be useful.

What Does It Take

You need to have:

- excellent problem solving skills
- numeracy skills
- good concentration skills
- good communication skills
- practical and technical ability.

You need to be able to:

- adapt to change
- think logically
- follow strict working procedures
- work as part of a team
- follow health and safety procedures.

Training

- You would follow an employer's training scheme, where you learn how to use the tools and equipment for this type of work, as well as safety procedures.
- After your initial training, you will continue to do further short training courses to update your skills as you build your experience on the job.

Getting On

Promotion prospects will depend on the size of the organisation. In larger organisations you may be able to progress to a supervisor, then to field team manager.

Contacts

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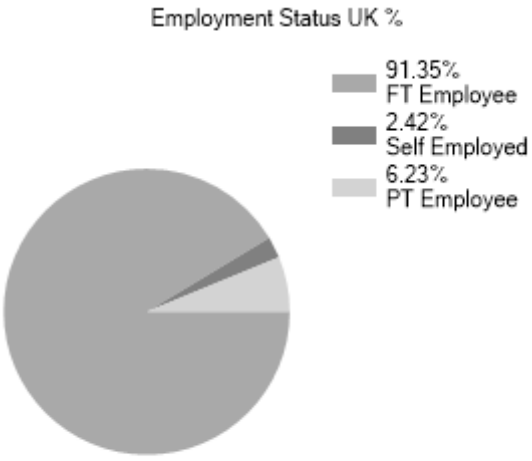
Statistics



Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

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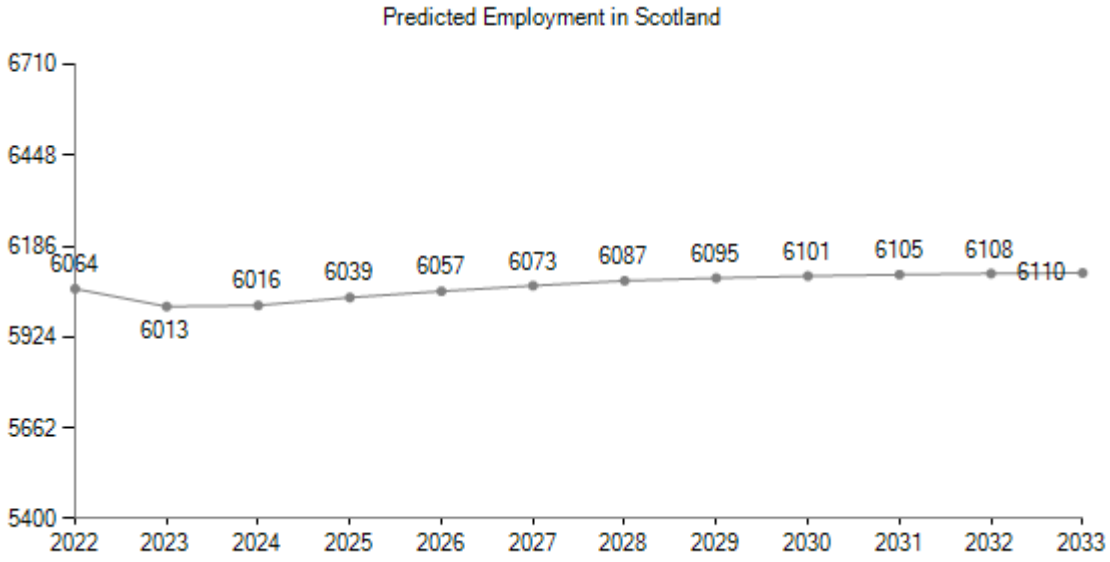

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