

✓Professional ↗Purposeful +Passionate

Trainee Environment Protection Officer Programme 2024



Who are we?

SEPA are the Scottish Environment Protection Agency. Our role is to make sure that the environment and human health are protected, to ensure that Scotland's natural resources and services are used as sustainably as possible and contribute to sustainable economic growth.

We're creating a world class agency, ready for the significant challenges ahead. It's what our planet needs and deserves. We want to grow our own talent and create a workforce that is ready to help build a stronger, fairer and more sustainable nation.

If you think you have the skills we're looking for and want an exciting job in which you can help create a better future, we are recruiting now for our 2024 intake of Trainee Environment Protection Officers.



“This is a transformative time to join SEPA as we reset and rebuild our organisation to protect our environment today and create a world-class environment protection agency fit for the challenges of tomorrow”.

Nicole Paterson
SEPA Chief Executive Officer



Our values

How do we protect, support and promote the environment across Scotland?

By being **Purposeful**, **Professional** and **Passionate** about what we do.

Purposeful

Our priorities are at the core of our purpose.

We work proactively at pace to do the right thing for our environment, communities and colleagues. That means we're adaptable, resilient and transparent with each other.

We look at the best way to get things done and deliver our environmental priorities, with sustainable solutions being our only practical option.

Professional

Being transparent, evidence based and totally accountable for everything we do is a fundamental part of our role.

We are considered and considerate, respectful of each other and of different perspectives and priorities.

We understand, to get things done, we need to provide clarity and direction to everyone involved. Above all we need to inspire excellence and be a trusted partner in our communities.

Passionate

We embrace the opportunities we have to make a positive environmental impact across Scotland and care deeply about reflecting the needs and concerns of our communities.

We're just as passionate about supporting and learning from each other. Empowering one another to challenge our thinking and influence meaningful change.

Our approach to regulation

- **Working in partnership** – We cannot achieve our outcomes by acting alone. Partnerships have always been a fundamental way of how we deliver regulatory outcomes and of how we help to deliver the best results most efficiently. Sometimes we lead, but equally we also commit to support the leadership of others by being an active partner.
- **Using all our influences** – As Scotland's national environmental regulator, we have a wide range of legislative powers, but also considerable influence. Using this wider influence to protect and improve the environment and communities will yield better outcomes.
- **Understanding our environment** – We know our environment is changing. Understanding how, why and where changes are occurring allows us to focus our efforts on the most critical issues and to take preventative action against emerging threats.
- **Securing compliance** – We expect all regulated operators to understand their impact on the environment and to comply with their obligations in legislation and conditions set out in authorisations. Operators that want to do the right thing will be supported, those that seek to benefit from non-compliance will be targeted.
- **Tackling environmental crime** – Environmental crime impacts the environment, blights communities, and creates risks to legitimate business, health and well-being. Tackling it requires a multi-agency approach that creates a hostile business environment for those that choose not to comply with the law.
- **Tackling systemic environmental issues** – The climate, pollution and nature loss crises are the result of continued overuse of the planet's resources. Securing compliance alone will not resolve these crises nor tackle the underlying causes of them. We must go further.

What will you be doing?

You will join one of our public facing frontline teams and undertake a structured training programme. You will learn a range of crucial environmental activities such as:

- Inspecting sites and reviewing data to assess a permit holder's environmental performance.
- Providing advice and guidance to external stakeholders in relation to compliance with environmental regulations.
- Investigating and resolving pollution incidents.
- Leading investigations into non-compliant activities to seek a solution to environmental offences, including taking appropriate enforcement action.



How will I learn?

You will undertake a structured training programme over two years. This will include a mixture of on-the-job training, mentoring, e-learning and some structured classroom-based learning sessions. This training is aimed at providing staff with necessary skills and experience to be fully competent regulatory officers.

The training is all geared towards developing the ability to do something, rather than simply knowing about it. Therefore, the training process provides you with the opportunity to apply your acquired knowledge and demonstrate competence.

In short, you will be making an immediate contribution to environmental protection and as you build the key skills and competencies, you will start to make a real operational contribution to your team during the training period.





Are you our ideal candidate?

You'll ideally have exposure to a regulatory, enforcement or customer-focused role. Perhaps you've inspected sites, handled complaints or been in a role where you've had difficult conversations with customers.

Whatever your background, you'll be passionate about the environment, enjoy working outdoors, and be willing to enforce environmental regulations, even if this means sometimes dealing with confrontational situations.

You'll be an effective communicator and who is able to influence and persuade others to do the right thing. You should be adaptable, well organised, and a good problem solver with a positive attitude to handling difficult situations and making decisions.

You'll have a keen eye for detail, be comfortable using IT and data, and be able to record information accurately.

You'll be focussed on learning about environmental regulation, making the most of the development opportunities and take ownership for your own learning to ensure you progress and achieve key development milestones.

Where will I be working?

The nature of the job will involve travel to (and working at) a variety of locations across your area for regulatory, monitoring, enforcement and incident management purposes. This will include remote sites, riverbanks, uneven terrain, agricultural and industrial premises.

You must provide a vehicle and have a valid full UK driving licence, but all business expenses are paid as appropriate.

The training scheme includes a week's residential course and other ad-hoc overnight stays - you must be willing to be away from home in order to attend these courses but plenty of notice will be given.

You will be working within one of the nine geographic areas SEPA covers. There are 12 offices which cover our geographical areas; these are: **Aberdeen, Arbroath, Ayr, Dingwall, Edinburgh, Elgin, Eurocentral, Galashiels, Glasgow, Lochgilphead, Perth and Stirling**. At application you will be asked to state your preferred base office location.

Salary & benefits

Financial benefits

- The starting salary will be £32,149 (based on 2024-2025 pay scales).
- Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) administered by Falkirk Council. The scheme operates on a career average revalued earnings (CARE) basis.
- Give as you Earn (GAYE): We also run an optional payroll giving scheme, which enables you to donate to your chosen charity via [Charities Aid Foundation](#).
- Interest Free Loans: You can access a free loan for public transport season tickets, which you can then repay through agreed monthly salary deductions.

Key benefits

- Generous annual leave entitlements starting from 30 days per year increasing to 34 after five years of reckonable service.
- Seven public holidays.
- Additional Annual Leave Purchase Scheme.
- Occupational sick pay (entitlements based on length of reckonable service).
- Flexible Working Policy.
- Hybrid Working Policy.
- Wide range of family friendly policies including, maternity leave, parental leave, adoption leave, shared parental leave and paternity leave.

Health & lifestyle benefits

- Occupational health benefits and access to a free Employee Assistance Programme which provides life management services.
- Employer Supported Volunteering Scheme which allows every member of staff a day's paid leave per year to participate in voluntary work.
- One paid well-being day.
- Cycle to work scheme (a tax efficient way to purchase a bicycle through salary sacrifice).
- Staff and corporate discounts.

The application process

Online application

Applications open on 15 July 2024

[Jobs | Scottish Environment Protection Agency \(SEPA\)](#)

Application form

All application forms will need to be submitted by 11 August 2024

Assessment centre

Successful applicants will be invited to the assessment centre in September 2024

Offer

Offers of employment will be made shortly after the assessment day

Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the Trainee Environment Protection Officer Programme?

Our programme lasts for a maximum of two years. During that time, you will complete a structured training programme including a mixture of on-the-job training, mentoring, e-learning and some structured classroom-based learning sessions.

Is this a general scheme or are you looking for specific qualifications?

This scheme focuses on environmental regulation.

As a minimum you should hold or be working towards a HND in a relevant subject (e.g. science, environment, engineering) or have equivalent relevant work experience.

What does the recruitment process involve?

The process will start with an online application. If you are successful at this stage, we will ask you to complete some online testing. After that, successful candidates will be invited to our assessment centre.

Is there shift work?

No, you won't be asked to do shift work. SEPA has a flexi-time scheme which means that you can work flexibly in agreement with your manager.

You may, from time to time, be asked to work earlier or later because of the specific assignment you are working on.

Do I need to provide a vehicle?

Due to the nature of your post you will be required to provide a roadworthy and appropriately insured vehicle, suitable for business use. You will need a valid driver's license which allows you to drive in the UK. Travel expenses for business mileage will be provided.

Do you accept applications from outside the UK?

We do; however, you must have the legal right to live and work in the UK. SEPA are unable to provide visa sponsorship for candidates.

Do you pay expenses for candidates travelling to the assessment centre?

Yes, you can claim back your travel costs to a maximum of £150. If you are invited to the assessment centre, we will send you a form and further details on how to claim.

Am I guaranteed a job at the end of the two years?

Following successful completion of the two-year programme, you will be offered a permanent environmental protection officer role.

Frequently Asked Questions (continued)

<p>Is there an application deadline?</p> <p>The application window opens on the 15 July 2024 and the closing date is 11 August 2024.</p> <p>Unfortunately, we cannot accept late applications.</p>	<p>When will I start?</p> <p>Successful applicants will start in Autumn 2024.</p>	<p>What will my salary be?</p> <p>The starting salary will be £32,149 (based on 2024-2025 pay scales).</p>	<p>Do you complete pre-placement checks?</p> <p>Yes, we will obtain references to cover the last three years, you must supply a basic Disclosure Scotland certificate and complete pre-placement health questionnaire.</p>
<p>Can I leave throughout this period? What is the notice period?</p> <p>We hope that you will choose to stay with us for the full two-year traineeship, but if you choose to leave you will be required to give us four weeks' notice in writing.</p>	<p>Can I defer my start date?</p> <p>Unfortunately, we cannot accept deferred applications.</p>	<p>Where could I be based?</p> <p>We work across 9 geographic areas, covering all over Scotland. As part of the online application, you will be asked to select your preferred base office from:</p> <p>Ayr, Galashiels, Edinburgh, Arbroath, Stirling, Perth, Glasgow, Motherwell, Lochgilphead, Elgin, Dingwall, Aberdeen</p>	<p>I have another question, who should I contact?</p> <p>Email us at: hr@sepa.org.uk and we will get back to you as soon as we can.</p>

Tips for completing your application form

To apply for our Trainee Programme, you will need to complete an online application form.

Here are some tips to consider:



Time

Give yourself plenty of time to complete your application. It always takes longer than you think, so don't leave it to last minute.



Use examples

The job description explains the key skills and experience we are looking for candidates to demonstrate. If you have some good examples, then use them to tell us the positive impact you had on that situation. Tell us what you did; it's you that we are interested in.



Check for mistakes

An application form full of mistakes doesn't give a good impression. Check your application and don't just rely on spell check to pick things up.

Tips for the assessment centre

To apply for our Trainee Programme, you will need to complete an assessment centre.

Here are some tips to consider:



Homework

Research our organisation. You don't need to know us inside out, just a flavour of what we do.



Be yourself

Don't try and be someone else. We are interested in who you are and what you can bring to the organisation.



Give it your best shot

Make sure you listen carefully to what is being said to you on the day. Think about how you answer questions and think about why you should be selected for the 2024 Trainee Environment Protection Office Programme.



Good luck with your application.

If you would like this document in an accessible format, such as large print, audio recording or braille, please contact SEPA by emailing:

equalities@sepa.org.uk

iStock/612864068/ColobusYeti

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