



Senior Environmental Scientist

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I am a Senior Environmental Scientist with 14 years experience working in the design office and on construction sites. At the moment I am working on a major road construction project based in Aberdeen where I am responsible for ensuring that the construction complies with environmental legislation and guidance.

Why I chose my job

I love the variation that my job brings as no two days are the same, I have to be able to think on my feet and I enjoy the challenge that that gives me. My job also means that I get to see projects from start to finish such as the construction of a railway or road project. Standing in the middle of a dual carriageway before cars start to use it is an impressive sight, knowing that I played a part in its construction is hugely satisfying. I would recommend my job to those who like working with people and enjoy being challenged.

The day-to-day

I work on a construction site and start in the site office at around 08:00am. I am responsible for managing and co-ordinating several environmental disciplines which include archaeology, ecology, contaminated land, landscape and groundwater. I check my emails and see if there are any issues that need to be dealt with quickly; for instance if there are trees that require felling I would ensure that an ecologist meets with the crew on site to check the area for nesting birds or bat roosts. I am also responsible for reviewing the design and how is it implemented on site - things can look very different on paper and sometimes things need to change on site. For example, in my current project there are wildlife bridges and underpasses - I must ensure that they are designed and constructed so that animals can access them on site, otherwise they will not work.

Key skills

- Excellent verbal and written communication
- IT skills with a working knowledge of Microsoft Office Suite
- Ability to work as part of a team
- An interest in environmental issues
- Good time management and organisation skills
- Comfortable working outdoors

Qualifications

An undergraduate degree in Earth Sciences, or a Science related degree. I studied Chemistry, Physics and German at A-Level and then went on to study Environmental Science at the University of Greenwich. For me the best thing I did was complete an industrial placement after the second year of my degree as it allowed me to see what I could do once I finished university.

Salary & Progression

A typical entry level salary is around £21,000 depending on location and sector. As your experience grows your salary will increase, the more you put in the more you get out. Once you have your degree you will need to become a member of a professional body and become chartered with them. An example would be the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA). The latest survey shows that a fully qualified, experienced IEMA member can now expect an annual salary in excess of £46,000, with a fortunate few environmental professionals earning above £100,000.

Where to find out more

There are several web-sites to look at, a few are listed below:

www.endsreport.com

www.iema.net

brownfieldbriefing.com