

Getting Ahead in the Rail Industry

With the Government and business regulators placing such a huge emphasis on offsetting personal and private carbon emissions it is perhaps unsurprising that this industry is expanding its work force. It is also changing its approach to provide the right level of service to meet the needs of a general public that are beginning to be encouraged to choose a rail alternative wherever possible.

Having experienced the destabilisation of the industry that privatisation under John Major's Government brought about, the rail industry has diversified greatly across the UK. As an industry it now presents a vast number of opportunities at all levels of entry across the different operators responsible for rail service to the public.

The [rail industry](#) has now been split into over 100 companies, which range from suppliers to those who maintain the lines to operators of the rail service. This huge diversity means that there are many positions coming online for those wishing to join this essential industry. As you would expect from an industry that, despite its fragmentation, is still so highly regulated there are many specific qualifications available to get you the position you require. These range from NQF industry framework qualifications to experience on a senior level of infrastructure management and project commissioning.

However, companies such as Network Rail do not generally consider national qualifications a suitable foundation for the skills necessary throughout the rail industry and so have set up their own credit framework for its employees that work alongside existing national qualifications such as NVQs. If you are looking to further your career in the rail industry, taking a job with Network Rail or one of the bigger companies which offer specific rail qualifications will provide you with the training and knowledge that will get your career off to a flying start.

Some of these operators are responsible for their own training academies so whether you are a graduate looking to work in mainline industry or the underground there is a program for you. For example, First Great Western has a dedicated academy for those wishing to enter the industry from apprentice level. All of their courses are recognised by City and Guilds and the Centre for Rail Skills. Also providing the Leadership Horizons programme for line managers, undertaking any course at this academy will lead to a nationally recognised qualification created by the industry for the industry.

With an immense overhaul in productivity over the last 10 years or so, rail jobs are now better paid and more rewarding than ever. There are opportunities at all levels within the rail industry from those who specialise in maintaining the infrastructure to those who man the trains. Transport For London is another company who have developed their own graduate programme for training. As the operator of the London Underground, this company once again spearheads its own courses to suit its needs so employees are able to work to the standards expected of them in this specialised area.

Working towards ever-changing performance figures and improved safety measures, rail jobs today focus on all aspects of the rail industry from construction and technical jobs to customer facing operations. With everyone from track workers to construction workers having improved working conditions to enjoy, the expansion and improvement of the 'permanent way' can include challenges such as inspecting infrastructure for defects and the refurbishment of existing facilities to ensure safety.

No matter if you're looking to change direction with your career or to move into the rail industry as a graduate, experience of disciplines such as engineering and customer-facing operations can be utilised throughout the changing rail industry.

About the Author

Duncan freer - Director - [Rail Jobs](#) Search is a job site dedicated to the specific needs of candidates who work in the building services and Rail industry in the UK. We also provide recruiters with an online service that is effective in terms of cost and ease of use.

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