

Reed  
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Food & FMCG

# Salary guide 2024



# The cost of winning in 2024



The end of 2023 saw slowing inflation, a positive sign for the year ahead. But no matter what happens with the inflation rate, people will still be feeling the pinch of the cost-of-living crisis. Many will be looking for jobs that can offer the salary and benefits they need to stay afloat.

It's the people working in organisations that make the difference, so it is important that companies do all they can to offer the best remuneration packages to attract new, good quality hires and to retain their best people.

Towards the end of last year, we conducted our annual survey of 5,000 workers to provide you with a representative picture of the wants and needs of the UK workforce. You can see an in-depth analysis of the results of the survey further on in this guide, but interestingly, 55% of people are currently looking for, or considering looking for, a new job. The top reasons for looking to leave their current role include pay being insufficient or perceived to be better elsewhere, benefits not being good enough, and a toxic workplace culture.

On top of this, just over half of workers (56%) are happy with the pay they receive, but this does mean that many are not. Of those who aren't satisfied with what they are earning, over half (57%) stated that this is because their salary hasn't risen with the cost of living. Over a third (39%) say it's not enough for them to live the lifestyle they want, and (38%) feel they are unable to save enough money to meet their financial goals.

As a business leader, I know it isn't always possible to increase salaries, especially with rising costs, the burden of overheads and higher business rates looming. However, it's important that if you can, you consider doing so, because even a small amount can make a big difference.

In my experience, the best investment you can make is in people, and in return, you will see improvements to productivity, employee retention, customer satisfaction and ultimately your bottom line. But if there really isn't anything you can do with salary, focus on the benefits you can offer – make your place of work difficult to leave and become a 'star player' when it comes to added value. Our research highlights the disparity between what is being offered and what people really want, so don't be afraid to ask your colleagues what they actually want and keep doing this on a regular basis to ensure you have your finger on the pulse.

This year, our research has also highlighted some significant gender disparities. According to our survey, women are earning on average £10,000 less than their male counterparts. 57% of men feel confident they will achieve their dream salary, as opposed to just 44% of women. Women's mental health is also more likely to be impacted negatively by their current financial situation (40% vs 29% of men). And overall, women are less likely to receive any work benefits (35% vs 25% of men), but when they do get them, they are more likely to prefer flexi time (40% vs 32% of men) and are less likely to get a salary increment (16% vs 20% of men).

These disturbing statistics highlight that there is still much work to be done to close the gender pay gap. According to the Office for National Statistics, the gap in median hourly pay between full-time male and female employees increased to 7.7% in 2023. Organisations should continue to address women's inequality in the workplace and it's certainly something we are working on here at Reed. Addressing gender pay will bring a range of benefits to your business including improved morale, higher retention, increased innovation, improved productivity and lower legal risks.

Not only must we bridge the pay gap, but business leaders also need to ensure that no matter what journey you find your organisations are on in 2024, inclusion and belonging should remain paramount in the workplace. This will ensure you widen your doors to access the best talent available. In an environment where you will need innovative, creative and productive people more than ever, this makes perfect business sense.

Remember, your people are your superpower!

Wishing you all the best for the year ahead.

James Reed CBE  
Chairman and Chief Executive, Reed

# Why use Reed's food & FMCG salary guide?

For both jobseekers and employers alike, Reed's salary guide stands as an invaluable resource, offering unparalleled insights to keep you well-informed and ahead of the curve in 2024.



## Extensive view

This guide covers a wide range of jobs at all seniorities across the food and FMCG sector. Whether you're a seasoned professional or just starting out, you'll find valuable insights to help you succeed.



## Superior insight

Our food and FMCG expert provides key insight into the sector, with Reed's practice specialists and external experts discussing the job landscape at a deeper level. This means you'll get a unique perspective on the job market that is not available elsewhere.



## Stay well informed

The data in this guide is based on salaries expected today, so you can use the information to steer your decisions and make informed choices on the salaries you offer your employees or accept yourself. You'll be able to stay up to date on the latest trends and developments in the sector.

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# Quality, innovation, and sustainability: the three pillars transforming the sector



**Adam Buckland**

Divisional Managing Director – Food & FMCG, Reed

**In recent years, the UK's food and FMCG market has witnessed a significant tightening of regulations relating to food safety and quality. This move aims to safeguard public health, effectively minimising the economic and social impact of foodborne illnesses.**

Companies are also expected to align their food production to reflect consumer expectations, with many customers increasingly prioritising product quality, safety, and ethical practices. These strict regulations maintain safety and play a pivotal role in strengthening economic growth and international trade through adherence to safety and quality benchmarks.

This heightened regulatory landscape has resulted in a high demand for professionals in quality assurance and control, as well as senior staff with technical acumen. However, many organisations are encountering difficulties in securing the necessary talent in these areas. This scarcity could potentially jeopardise the industry's ability to sustain high standards and meet the evolving expectations of consumers, likely becoming a primary concern for businesses in 2024.

## ↓ **Product development and innovation driving growth**

In the race for market dominance, companies require innovative products to maintain an edge over their competitors and remain profitable.

Professionals specialising in new product development (NPD) are critical now in creating distinctive offerings that differentiate brands and captivate consumers. Therefore, we have seen many businesses seeking experts that can integrate cutting-edge technologies such as AI, Internet of Things, and data analytics to elevate product quality, anticipate market

trends, strengthen creativity, streamline processes, and bring consumer-centric products to market swiftly.

In addition to launching new products, technology is providing the FMCG sector with a faster time to market. The term 'fast-moving consumer goods' exists for a reason. To remain competitive brands need to stay on their toes. In an industry that moves quickly and where consumer tastes and demands are rapidly evolving, it's essential to keep your finger on the pulse of the market.

## ↓ **Sustainability takes priority**

Consumers are increasingly prioritising eco-friendly products and sustainable practices which has significantly influenced companies within the food and FMCG sector. They've begun reevaluating their processes, from sourcing ingredients to packaging and distribution, with a focus on reducing environmental impact.

The push for sustainability extends throughout the supply chain. Companies are striving to implement 'green' sourcing methods, promoting fair trade practices, reducing waste at production sites, and optimising transportation to minimise carbon emissions.

This has had a profound impact on the demand for talent in this space. With companies heavily investing in sustainability research and development, new roles and prospects are arising for packaging engineers, sustainability experts, and material scientists. And the shift towards sustainable packaging is leading to high demand for roles centred around eco-design, waste reduction, circular economy strategies, and packaging optimisation, thereby diversifying and expanding the jobs market within these areas.

## ↓ Challenges and opportunities for 2024

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The future looks exciting for the sector, presenting many opportunities for organisations to find innovative solutions and for professionals to expand their skill sets and enrich their CVs. The integration of new technologies into product development, such as plant-based alternatives, biodegradable packaging, and AI in production, opens numerous avenues for businesses. However, this also intensifies the pressure on companies to conform to increasingly stringent regulations.

These changes and technological advancements demand specialist skills, which may be hard to find in the food and FMCG market in the upcoming year. Equally daunting is the task of retaining these skilled employees.

To address this recruitment challenge, employers need to offer competitive compensation packages, promote opportunities for career growth, implement robust training programmes, cultivate a positive work culture, and adapt to the evolving needs and expectations of the workforce.

For professionals seeking new opportunities in 2024, I recommend staying abreast of industry trends, technological advancements, and evolving consumer preferences. By continuously learning and staying updated on market shifts, you can gain a competitive edge. It's essential to recognise the importance of soft skills; communication, problem-solving, and teamwork are often just as crucial as technical expertise in this team-centric industry.



# Our **survey** says...

At the end of 2023, Reed conducted its annual snap survey of 5,000 professionals. The research asked UK workers about their current and preferred salary and benefits, their organisation's performance and priorities, how they rated their job satisfaction and career prospects, as well as the key recruitment and skills trends they're witnessing. Here's what their answers revealed:



## Salaries

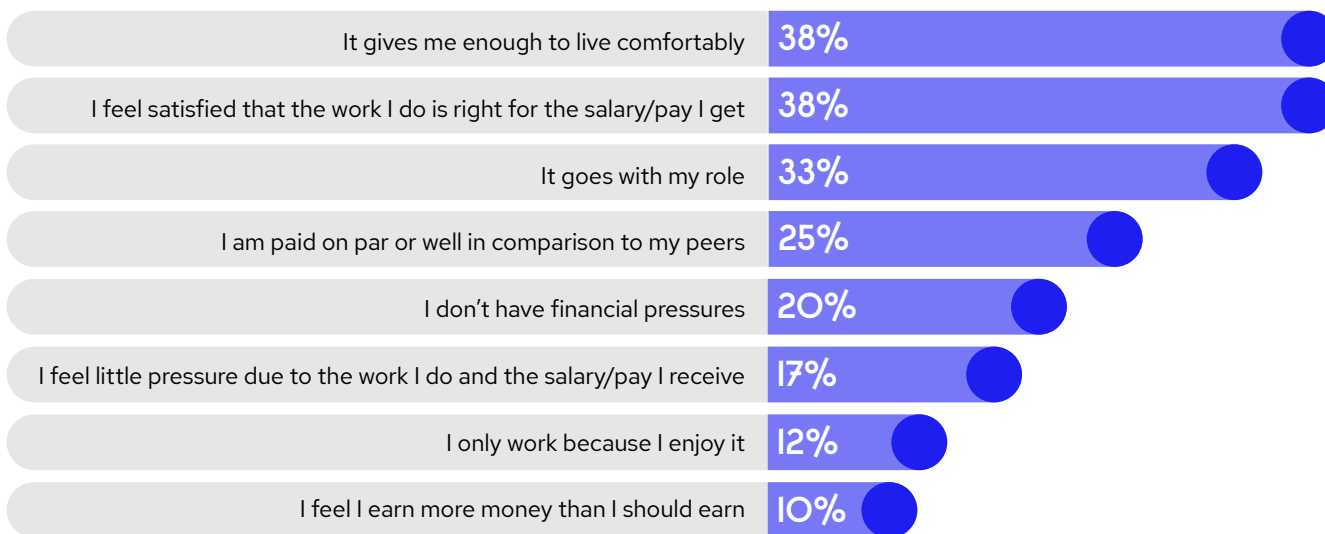
**With ongoing cost-of-living challenges, salaries will continue to be a huge area of discussion in the employment market, for both professionals and businesses.**

As many are feeling the pinch, we've seen more talent move around to secure higher paid roles, with businesses analysing how much they can stretch to get the people they need. Getting professionals' take on their salaries is critical for businesses looking to benchmark what they can offer. Interestingly, the data has also revealed a gulf between men and women when it comes to attitudes to salary.

Currently, over half (56%) of workers are happy with the pay they receive, a slight incline from the previous year (53%). Although, around one-in-four (24%) professionals feel unhappy with their current salary.

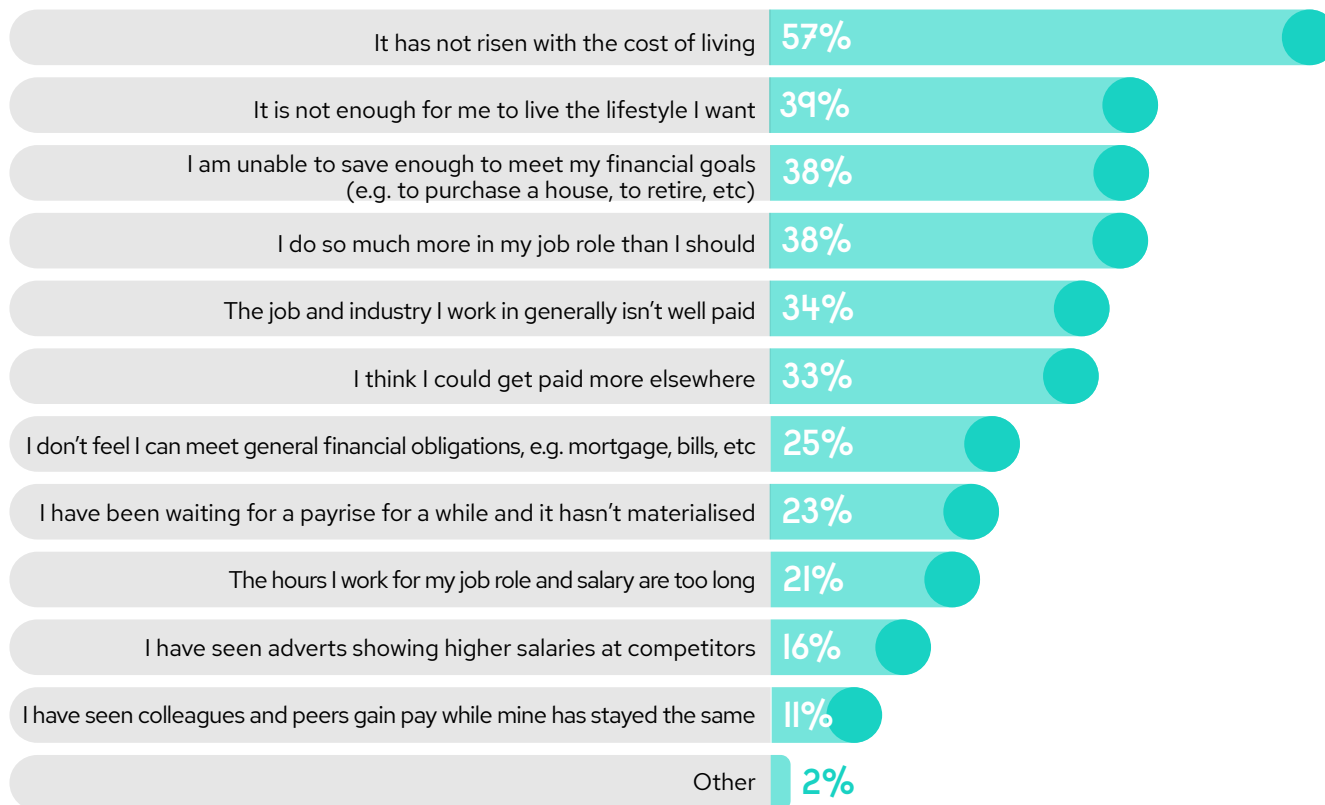
Of those who are happy with their pay, 38% say it's because it's enough for them to live comfortably on, 38% feel satisfied that the work they do is right for the salary they receive, and 33% believe it goes well with their role.

## ↓ Why are workers happy with their current salary/earnings?



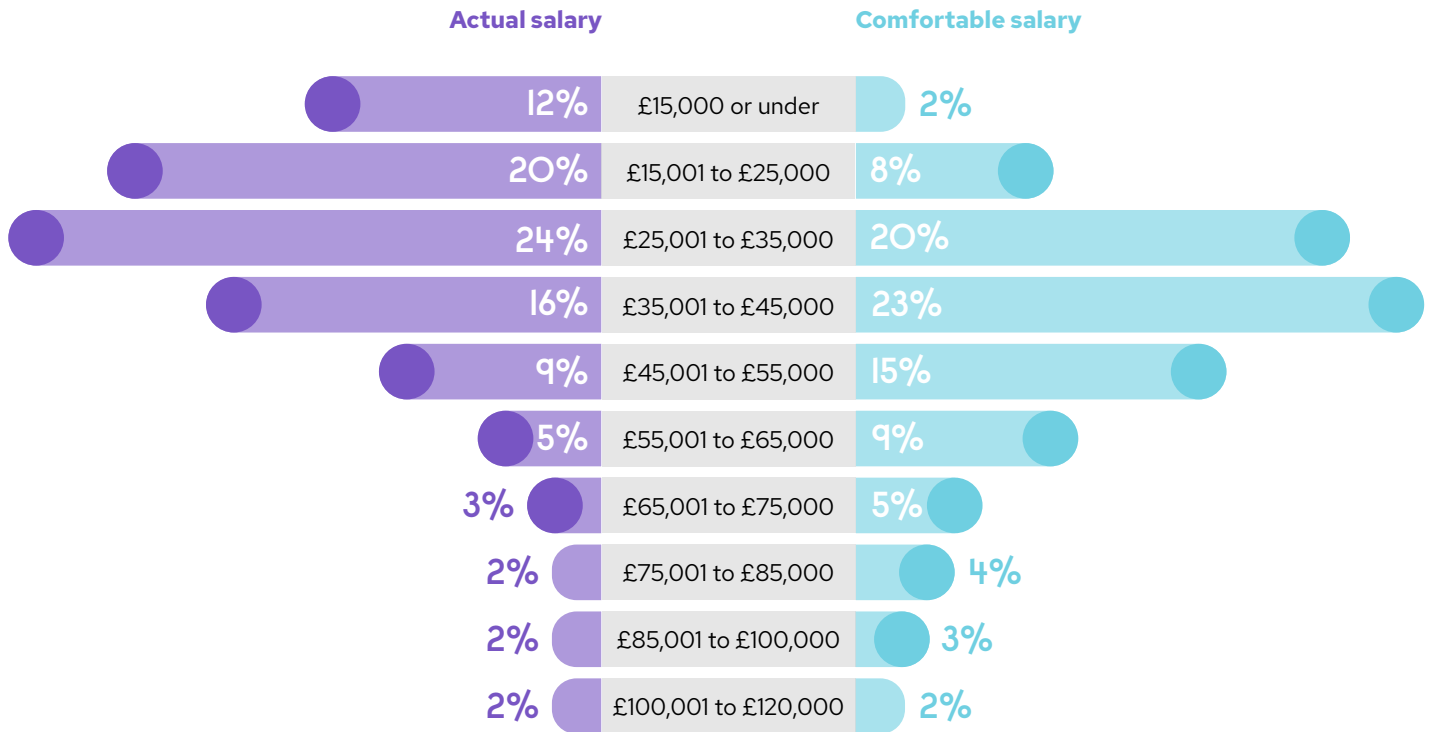
But, as expected, continued increases in inflation and bills have put many under greater financial pressure. Over half (57%) of those who aren't satisfied with their salary shared that this is because it hasn't risen with the cost of living, over a third (39%) say it's not enough for them to live the lifestyle they want, and 38% feel they are unable to save enough money to meet their financial goals.

## ↓ Why are workers unhappy with their current salary/earnings?



The disparity between the average wage and the salary people would be comfortable with remains quite large. This year, the average ideal salary is **£48,500**, whereas the average wage for survey respondents stands **£13,200** short at **£35,200**. Last year, this gap was **£13,800** – showing a small shift in expectations.

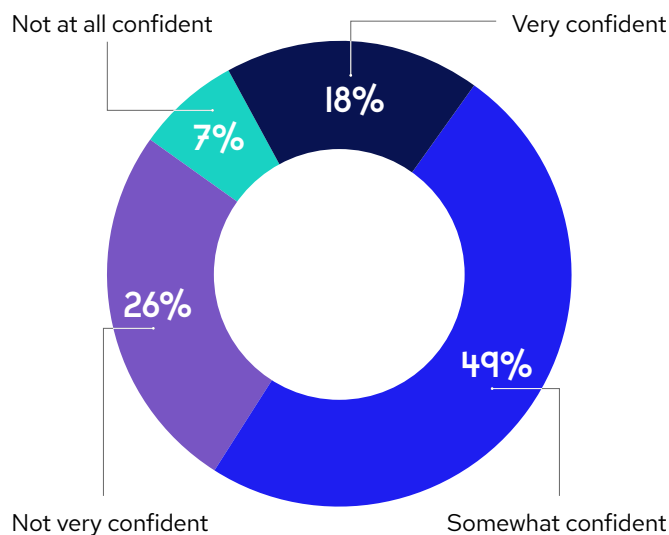
### ↓ Actual vs comfortable salary



Half (50%) feel confident that they will achieve their comfortable salary at some point. Depending on whether you take a glass half empty, or half full approach, this may be an indication that those who wish to earn more may consider moving companies to secure a higher wage.

It's worth noting that there's a difference between men and women. Men have a higher comfortable salary of £52,000 compared to women (£45,000). And more men (57%) feel confident they will hit that salary, compared to less than half of women (44%).

### ↓ Confidence in achieving financial goals in time





As the economy has continued to take its toll on professionals over the past two years, we also asked people how they have been managing their wages, and whether the current financial climate has impacted their financial goals and savings.

On average, people are spending 60% of their monthly wage on essential purchases – including bills, mortgages, food, etc – with the remainder being split evenly between luxury spending and savings. In comparison to 2021, that’s an increase of six per cent going to essential purchases and a four per cent drop in luxury items. Additionally, over one-in-five (22%) aren’t saving any of their salary because they can’t afford to do so, with a third (33%) not feeling confident they will meet their financial saving goals on time. The cost-of-living crisis seems to be taking a heavier toll on women – they are more likely to say they can’t afford to save money – 24% compared with 19% for men. They are also less confident in achieving their financial goals: 61% of women feel confident, compared with 75% of men.

Women’s mental health is also suffering due to finances. Forty per cent of women say their financial situation is impacting their mental health negatively, compared with 29% of men.

## All about the **benefits**

It seems that offering a higher salary remains the most ideal way to attract and retain employees – but this isn’t viable for every business, as they are also battling rising bills and tighter overheads.



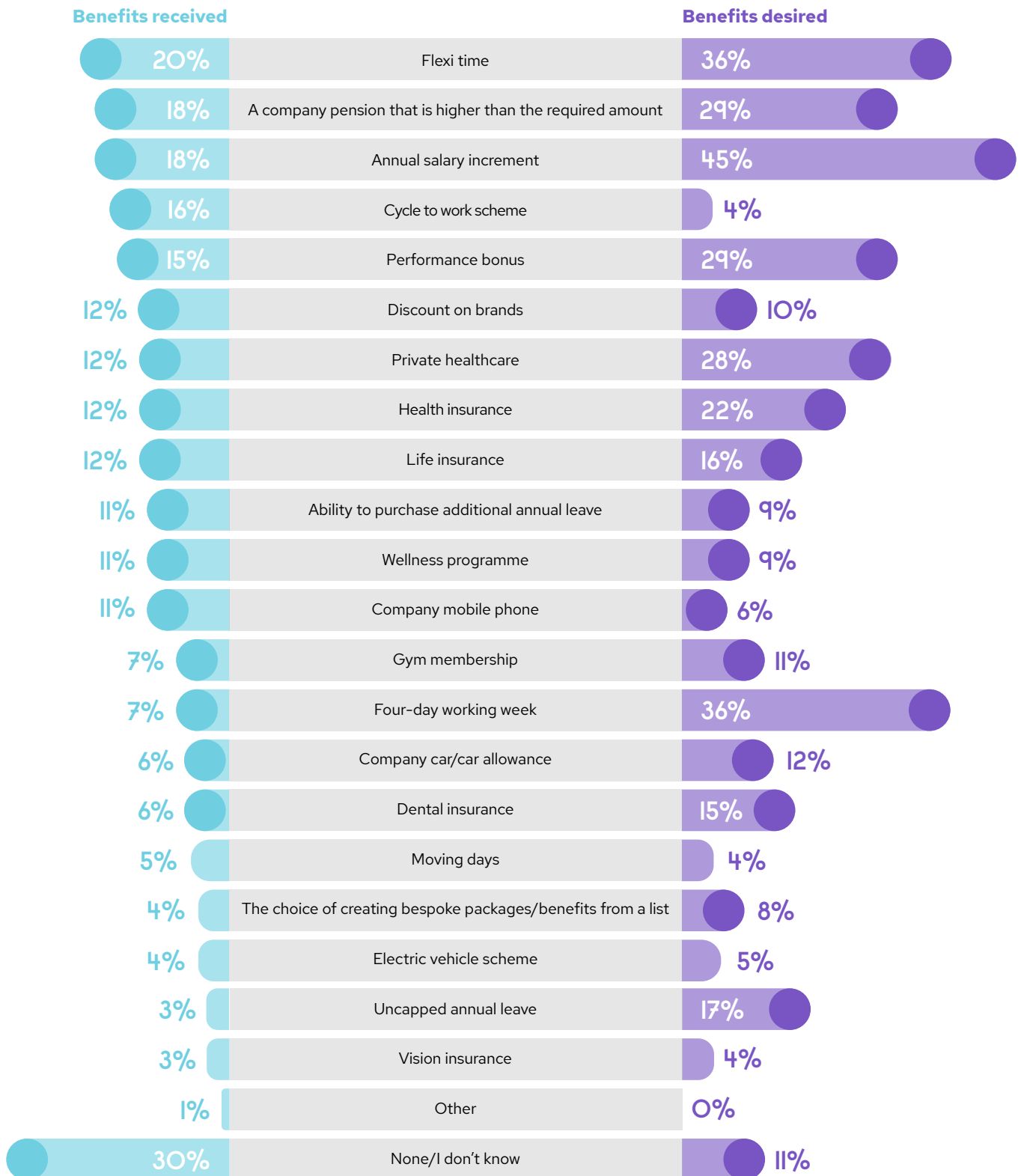
Where raising salaries isn’t an option, the benefits businesses offer can potentially tip the balance when people are considering changing jobs. Surprisingly, however, three-in-10 (30%) say they don’t receive any workplace benefits at all.

There seems to be a more even playing field when it comes to the benefits in demand this year versus the last few years. In 2021, we saw higher demand for health-related benefits, which reflected the stress the pandemic had on workers. Last year, workers were feeling the initial impact of rising energy bills and inflation, which was reflected in their desire for more financial-led benefits, such as salary increments and pensions. This year, however, there’s a greater balance between money and flexibility.

There also seems to be some disconnect when it comes to offering workplace benefits. For those that do get workplace benefits, the three most common are: flexi time (20%), a company pension higher than the required amount (18%), and an annual salary increment (18%).

In comparison, the top-three desired benefits are: an annual salary increment (45%), a four-day working week (36%), and flexi time (36%). There’s a disparity between what is being offered and what is desired, especially as only seven per cent of workers currently receive the second most demanded benefit – a four-day working week. Women are less likely to receive any work benefits. But the benefits they want vary – and they are most interested in flexi time.

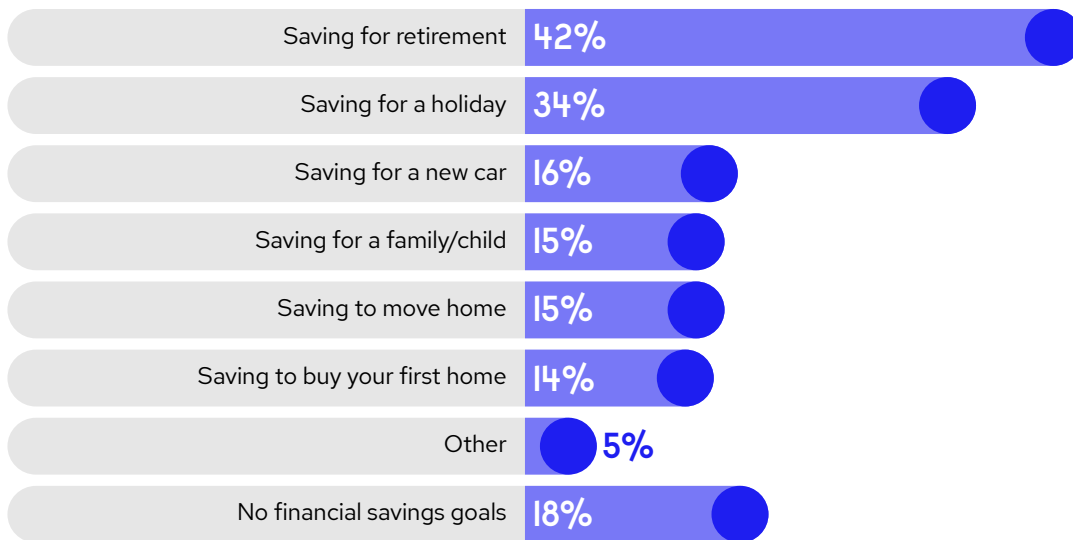
## ↓ Company benefits - received vs desired



Looking into people’s savings priorities, we can also pinpoint where businesses may be able to help. The top thing people are saving for is retirement (42%), meaning businesses that offer better pension support can be more attractive – a benefit that only 18% of workers are currently receiving but 29% would prefer.

Another top item people are saving for is a holiday (34%). In such cases, offering a performance bonus may help; a benefit that only 15% receive but, again, 29% would like.

### ↓ What are your financial savings goals?



## In summary

Over half of professionals (55%) are currently looking, or considering looking, for a new job – highlighting a need for businesses to audit what they are offering their current and future talent. Two of the top-five reasons for people looking elsewhere pertain to the salary not being enough or being better elsewhere, with another top reason being that the benefits package isn’t sufficient.

There are some areas where businesses could better align their benefits packages to the wishes of candidates. Aside from the four-day working week, the most popular benefits do fall into the top benefits employers offer but aren’t as high up in terms of importance when compared with employee preferences.

There are also some areas where companies could save money by removing less popular benefits from their offering. Cycle to work schemes are the fourth most popular benefit supplied by workplaces (16%) but fall into one of the least desired benefits for employees, with only four per cent finding it an attractive add-on. Only 12% receive private healthcare, whereas 28% find it an attractive benefit; the same trend is found in health insurance, with only 12% of businesses offering it, but 22% of employees wanting it.

Businesses should consider evaluating the benefits they offer and whether they appeal to their workers today, as the money they save on removing undesirable benefits could be better spent on more costly rewards that attract and retain top talent.

The gender differences also can’t be ignored. Women are less likely to reach their financial goals and be more negatively affected by the cost-of-living crisis.





# Why **Reed?**

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# East Anglia

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£66,600	£73,540	£87,875
Technical Manager	£48,100	£54,575	£64,750
Manufacturing Manager	£38,620	£48,795	£58,275
Health & Safety Manager	£43,245	£47,405	£57,815
Specifications Manager	£35,615	£42,135	£52,725
Production Manager	£33,765	£40,240	£51,525
NPD Manager	£38,850	£44,865	£57,350
QA Manager	£33,300	£40,515	£47,405
Hygiene Manager	£31,450	£39,130	£45,050
Packaging Technologist	£28,215	£32,840	£39,730

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,460	£26,365	£35,615
NPD Technologist	£24,515	£28,860	£32,900
Food/Beverage Technologist	£24,790	£28,905	£32,840
Specifications Technologist	£23,355	£26,595	£30,295
Quality Auditor	£22,895	£26,365	£30,065

## Regional insight

“ The way people are shopping has changed drastically this year. With rising food prices, consumers are having to find alternatives, new places to shop, and creative ways to cut down on spending. Supermarket own-brand sales have jumped by 10.3% and consumers face a £682 jump in their annual grocery bill if they continue to buy the same items. This has led to a huge shift in the food and drink and FMCG market, with companies having to rethink their strategies to compete with other businesses.

Despite consumers spending less on everyday items, many are still happy to indulge on premium items from brands they love as a luxury, therefore companies need to ensure they are marketing their products correctly – promoting high quality, trust, and taste. Professionals in new product development (NPD) are in high demand now but those with experience in bringing new products to market quickly are the most sought after.

We are also seeing a surge in demand for low- and no-alcohol products which is

creating more opportunities in the market. Along with waste reduction, sustainable packaging, and plant-based products, there are many exciting things to come. However, I predict that the biggest challenge for businesses in 2024 will be the demand for specialist skills.

To attract and retain talent, companies need to offer competitive remuneration, career advancement opportunities, comprehensive training, a positive work environment, and cater to the changing workforce needs. ”

**Dominic Watts**

Senior Business Manager, Reed





# London

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£72,000	£79,500	£95,000
Technical Manager	£52,000	£59,000	£70,000
Manufacturing Manager	£41,750	£52,750	£63,000
Health & Safety Manager	£46,750	£51,250	£62,500
Specifications Manager	£38,500	£45,550	£57,000
Production Manager	£36,500	£43,500	£55,700
NPD Manager	£42,000	£48,500	£62,000
QA Manager	£36,000	£43,800	£51,250
Hygiene Manager	£34,000	£42,300	£48,700
Packaging Technologist	£30,500	£35,500	£42,950

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£23,200	£28,500	£38,500
NPD Technologist	£26,500	£31,200	£35,570
Food/Beverage Technologist	£26,800	£31,250	£35,500
Specifications Technologist	£25,250	£28,750	£32,750
Quality Auditor	£24,750	£28,500	£32,500

## Regional insight

“ The capital has seen some interesting developments in the food and FMCG sector in 2023. I would say that one of the biggest changes we have seen is the huge increase in the number of plant-based products. Not only are they more sustainable and environmentally friendly, which is a huge priority for many businesses and consumers, they offer more options to those considering flexitarian, vegetarian, and vegan diets. Consumers are becoming more curious about these products, and the surge in demand has been met well by organisations that have expanded their ranges and launched new products to market.

In today’s fast-paced world, bringing new products to market quickly is essential.

Brands need to stay up to date with industry trends, innovations, and technologies if they want to remain competitive. And with artificial intelligence and advanced data analytics, companies can quickly gain insight into consumer behaviour, streamline processes, and make operations more effective. Professionals with experience of new product development and launches will continue to be highly sought after in 2024, especially those who can show how technology has reduced their time to market.

As previously mentioned, sustainability is a huge topic at the moment. From packaging and waste reduction to supply chain optimisation, sustainable practices are at the forefront of many organisations’ agenda.

I believe this will become even more of a priority in 2024, especially as we are starting to see more stringent regulations. This is also the case when it comes to food quality, so quality assurance and control professionals will also be in high demand this year.

I would advise businesses to offer salaries that are in line with the market rate as a minimum – use this guide to benchmark salaries in your region. But do not forget the importance of a comprehensive benefits package. Flexibility, healthcare, and generous pensions are still important benefits to employees, as well as career progression opportunities. ”



**Matt Pope**  
Divisional Manager, Reed

# External insight



**Mehdi Adjiri**

Group Head of Technical Accounts, Compleat Food Group

“ The food industry is in a much better place now compared to the situation directly after Covid and at the start of the cost-of-living crisis. With more investment in people and facilities, I can see more purpose-built factories coming, as well as more challenger startups bringing disruption across various product areas.

Recruiting and retaining talent remains a key challenge for businesses across London, as well as finding the right calibre of candidates. There continues to be a significant inflationary trend in salaries in

order to secure the right talent. I would suggest that businesses offer competitive packages and engage very early on with universities and colleges to promote themselves and highlight the benefits, from a development and breadth of career perspective, they can offer.

Those seeking new job opportunities should build as much operational experience as possible through placements or work experience. Create a great online presence through LinkedIn as it has become a key tool for recruiters

to assess candidates. And it goes without saying: have a well-structured, easy-to-read CV – and please, NO spelling mistakes! I would say that people and communication skills are critical. A good understanding of sustainability and environmental management is also becoming really important as we evolve to a decarbonised sector and have consumers that demand – rightfully so – that we as an industry make a difference and reduce our footprint. ”





# Midlands

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£68,040	£75,130	£89,775
Technical Manager	£49,140	£55,755	£66,150
Manufacturing Manager	£39,455	£49,850	£59,535
Health & Safety Manager	£44,180	£48,430	£59,065
Specifications Manager	£36,385	£43,045	£53,865
Production Manager	£34,495	£41,110	£52,635
NPD Manager	£39,690	£45,835	£58,590
QA Manager	£34,020	£41,390	£48,430
Hygiene Manager	£32,130	£39,975	£46,020
Packaging Technologist	£28,825	£33,550	£40,590

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,925	£26,935	£36,385
NPD Technologist	£25,045	£29,485	£33,615
Food/Beverage Technologist	£25,325	£29,530	£33,550
Specifications Technologist	£23,860	£27,170	£30,950
Quality Auditor	£23,390	£26,935	£30,715

## Regional insight

“ The Midlands is no different to other regions and has struggled with the same issues this year, but we have seen a real shift in the market which looks set to open more opportunities for businesses and professionals. Despite inflation, rising energy costs, and labour shortages, the market has responded well to changing consumer behaviour and the emergence of new technologies.

For example, with rising food prices, many consumers have looked at ways to cut down their spending. And more people are placing greater importance on sustainable and environmentally-friendly products. Organisations have responded well to these changes by cutting down on unnecessary

and unsustainable packaging – which means less money is spent on this step and can be reflected in the cost of items. Another way that businesses have responded is by introducing more plant-based items into their product ranges to appeal to consumers who want to reduce their environmental impact.

We are seeing more startups and SMEs entering the market, aiming to capitalise on these changing consumer trends. Some that have made a big impact are Too Good To Go, an app that enables restaurants, cafes and bakeries to list leftover food that would otherwise be thrown away. Users can then browse the map for food near them and pick up a ‘magic bag’ for a fraction of the original

retail cost. Likewise, Oddbox, is a delivery box service that rescues oddly shaped fruit and vegetables that would otherwise go to waste. More companies like these are cropping up (excuse the pun!) all the time and it will be interesting to see what other organisations do to reduce waste and appeal to ethically-conscious consumers.

2024 looks set to be another great year for the food and FMCG markets – just as long as employers prioritise attracting and retaining talent, as this is likely to be the main challenge for them. Offer competitive salaries and benefits, as well as great learning and development opportunities, to remain competitive. ”

**Dominic Watts**

Senior Business Manager, Reed







# North East

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£66,780	£73,735	£88,115
Technical Manager	£48,230	£54,725	£64,925
Manufacturing Manager	£38,725	£48,925	£58,435
Health & Safety Manager	£43,360	£47,535	£57,970
Specifications Manager	£35,710	£42,250	£52,870
Production Manager	£33,855	£40,345	£51,660
NPD Manager	£38,955	£44,985	£57,505
QA Manager	£33,390	£40,625	£47,535
Hygiene Manager	£31,535	£39,235	£45,170
Packaging Technologist	£28,290	£32,925	£39,835

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,520	£26,435	£35,710
NPD Technologist	£24,580	£28,940	£32,990
Food/Beverage Technologist	£24,855	£28,985	£32,925
Specifications Technologist	£23,420	£26,665	£30,375
Quality Auditor	£22,955	£26,435	£30,145

## Regional insight

“ 2023 has been an exciting year for the food and FMCG market in the North East. Although there have been difficulties, particularly with rising costs and inflation, the sector has seen growth and innovation in many areas.

Sustainability has been a key focus for many organisations in the past 12 months and will continue to be over the coming years. This is evident in the increase in plant-based products, reduced plastic packaging, and less waste. Companies are

also optimising supply chains to ensure that suppliers and partners are using sustainable products and methods and minimising fuel consumption.

This new focus on sustainability has led to an increased demand for professionals with experience in eco-design, waste reduction, circular economy strategies, and packaging optimisation. Those looking to enter the sector, as well as those wanting to diversify their skills, would do well to upskill in these areas.

The biggest challenge for employers this year will be attracting and retaining staff. It’s vital that you offer competitive salaries, a flexible and inclusive workplace, and benefits that really matter to your employees. Take the time to ask your workforce what perks they want and do your best to accommodate them. During the hiring process, employers should be ready to explain the career development opportunities within the organisation, as this is highly valuable to professionals in this sector. ”

**Adam Buckland**

Divisional Managing Director, Reed





# Need interview questions fast?

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- Step 1:** Tell us about the role
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- Step 3:** Download and share



The screenshot shows the 'Interview question generator' tool interface. It is divided into two main sections: 'About the role' and 'Interview questions'.

**About the role:** This section contains three dropdown menus: 'JOB TITLE\*' (set to 'HR manager'), 'LEVEL OF SENIORITY\*' (set to 'Head of Department'), and 'INDUSTRY\*' (set to 'Healthcare'). Below these is a 'Soft skills' section with the instruction 'Select up to three skills'. Three skills are selected: 'ADAPTABILITY', 'COLLABORATION', and 'COMMERCIAL AWARENESS'. There is also a 'COMMUNICATION' skill option.

**Interview questions:** This section displays four generated questions (Q1-Q4) related to the healthcare industry. Q1 asks about motivation in healthcare, Q2 asks about familiarity with market trends, Q3 asks about balancing technical expertise with business acumen, and Q4 asks about prioritizing projects based on their impact on the bottom line. The interface includes an 'AI powered' label and social sharing icons (Share, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter).

**Input field:** On the left, there is a text input field for 'JOB TITLE\*' with 'HR Manager' entered.

[Try it now](#) →



# North West

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£65,880	£72,745	£86,925
Technical Manager	£47,580	£53,985	£64,050
Manufacturing Manager	£38,200	£48,265	£57,645
Health & Safety Manager	£42,775	£46,895	£57,190
Specifications Manager	£35,230	£41,680	£52,155
Production Manager	£33,400	£39,805	£50,965
NPD Manager	£38,430	£44,380	£56,730
QA Manager	£32,940	£40,075	£46,895
Hygiene Manager	£31,110	£38,705	£44,560
Packaging Technologist	£27,910	£32,485	£39,300

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,230	£26,080	£35,230
NPD Technologist	£24,250	£28,550	£32,545
Food/Beverage Technologist	£24,520	£28,595	£32,485
Specifications Technologist	£23,105	£26,305	£29,965
Quality Auditor	£22,645	£26,080	£29,740

## Regional insight

“ The North West has long been home to global organisations and high-profile brands such as Kellogg’s and Heinz, and is a thriving hub for food and FMCG with many opportunities for professionals and businesses alike.

We have seen some exciting developments over the past year, with the introduction of AI and other technologies, like Internet of Things and data analytics, having a big impact. AI has disrupted almost every single sector in the world, and while there is still much to learn about its benefits and pitfalls, the food and FMCG market is already

starting to embrace it. AI can be used to improve operational efficiency, ensure regulations are met, and learn insights into customer preferences and behaviours.

It’s important to understand that companies embracing these developments will need the right people and expertise to drive the change. Those finding it difficult to source professionals with these technical skills should consider offering upskilling opportunities to existing employees. Not only will this give your business the skills it needs to grow, but it will also provide employees with a greater

sense of engagement and an opportunity to develop their expertise and careers.

Salaries are still a priority for professionals, and organisations need to offer competitive remuneration to attract and retain employees. But it goes beyond just offering a fair salary – the benefits you offer can be the deciding factor for a candidate when choosing between your company and another. Do you offer flexible working? How generous is your employee pension? Do you provide healthcare? All of these are important factors to consider when creating an employee benefits package. ”

**Adam Buckland**  
Divisional Managing Director, Reed





# Scotland

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£66,240	£73,140	£87,400
Technical Manager	£47,840	£54,280	£64,400
Manufacturing Manager	£38,410	£48,530	£57,960
Health & Safety Manager	£43,010	£47,150	£57,500
Specifications Manager	£35,420	£41,905	£52,440
Production Manager	£33,580	£40,020	£51,245
NPD Manager	£38,640	£44,620	£57,040
QA Manager	£33,120	£40,295	£47,150
Hygiene Manager	£31,280	£38,915	£44,805
Packaging Technologist	£28,060	£32,660	£39,515

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,345	£26,220	£35,420
NPD Technologist	£24,380	£28,705	£32,725
Food/Beverage Technologist	£24,655	£28,750	£32,660
Specifications Technologist	£23,230	£26,450	£30,130
Quality Auditor	£22,770	£26,220	£29,900

## Regional insight

“ The food and drink industry is one of the biggest sectors in Scotland, valued at around £15 billion, yet it has been a challenging year in the market with changes in both the retail landscape and consumer behaviour.

Companies have had to contend with supply chain issues, increased costs, skyrocketing energy bills, and talent shortages. Meanwhile, consumers have changed the way they shop. The e-commerce market has seen tremendous growth over the past few years and organisations are updating

their strategies to keep up with the market changes. Additionally, consumers are placing higher importance on sustainable food, with plant-based products seeing a huge rise in supply and demand – even with non-vegans. Shoppers are also changing their habits and switching providers and products in a bid to reduce outgoings.

Salaries are still a huge topic of debate across the sector in Scotland. In August 2023, we saw industrial action at a large food production and manufacturing organisation due to union members voting against a new pay deal.

Along with many sectors that have experienced industrial action this past year, food and FMCG organisations are having to revise their salary and benefits packages to attract and retain employees – and this is especially important in this sector, with its ongoing talent shortages.

Despite these challenges, the market overall has coped very well, and organisations are embracing new technologies and innovations. The challenge for 2024 is to ensure that you have the right talent to continue to drive growth. ”

**Adam Buckland**

Divisional Managing Director, Reed





# South East

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£69,480	£76,720	£91,675
Technical Manager	£50,180	£56,935	£67,550
Manufacturing Manager	£40,290	£50,905	£60,795
Health & Safety Manager	£45,115	£49,455	£60,315
Specifications Manager	£37,155	£43,955	£55,005
Production Manager	£35,225	£41,980	£53,750
NPD Manager	£40,530	£46,805	£59,830
QA Manager	£34,740	£42,265	£49,455
Hygiene Manager	£32,810	£40,820	£46,995
Packaging Technologist	£29,435	£34,260	£41,445

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£22,390	£27,505	£37,155
NPD Technologist	£25,575	£30,110	£34,325
Food/Beverage Technologist	£25,860	£30,155	£34,260
Specifications Technologist	£24,365	£27,745	£31,605
Quality Auditor	£23,885	£27,505	£31,365

## Regional insight

“ The food and FMCG market across the South East has been challenging this past year. Inflation and rising food prices have had a profound impact on consumers as well as organisations and farmers. Many businesses are having to cut costs and increase prices, all while battling large corporations and high competition from other brands. This, on top of labour shortages, has been tough for many employers.

However, there are many positive trends we have seen recently – with more emphasis being placed on sustainability and food quality. Additionally, the emergence of new technologies has led

to some exciting innovations – and I’m not talking about the Channel 4 satirical mockumentary, ‘The British Miracle Meat’, with Gregg Wallace about the development of human meat to battle rising inflation! Luckily, the developments we have seen are all positive steps to ensure the food and drink and FMCG sectors are sustainable, ethical, and prioritising quality. The growth we have seen in the plant-based market is having a big impact on the sector.

Consumer behaviour is changing, and more and more people are open to trying plant-based products to not

only be healthier, but reduce their own environmental footprint. Brands are launching new products left, right and centre, and the demand is growing.

The hardest challenge for businesses over the coming 12 months will be tackling labour shortages – particularly in relation to those experienced in new product development, quality assurance and control, and waste reduction. Those that offer good salaries, a clear progression path, and a positive workplace culture, will put themselves in a good position to attract top talent, as well as retain existing employees. ”



**Matt Pope**  
Divisional Manager, Reed



# South West & Wales

Role	Min	Average	Max
Technical Director	£67,320	£74,335	£88,825
Technical Manager	£48,620	£55,165	£65,450
Manufacturing Manager	£39,035	£49,320	£58,905
Health & Safety Manager	£43,710	£47,920	£58,440
Specifications Manager	£36,000	£42,590	£53,295
Production Manager	£34,130	£40,675	£52,080
NPD Manager	£39,270	£45,350	£57,970
QA Manager	£33,660	£40,955	£47,920
Hygiene Manager	£31,790	£39,550	£45,535
Packaging Technologist	£28,520	£33,195	£40,160

Role	Min	Average	Max
QA/QC Technician	£21,690	£26,650	£36,000
NPD Technologist	£24,780	£29,170	£33,260
Food/Beverage Technologist	£25,060	£29,220	£33,195
Specifications Technologist	£23,610	£26,880	£30,620
Quality Auditor	£23,140	£26,650	£30,390

## Regional insight

It has been a year full of exciting developments in the food and FMCG markets in the South West and Wales. We have seen a big push, particularly in Wales, to promote and encourage healthier eating. In a bid to tackle the rising levels of obesity, the Welsh government plans to put a stop to meal deal promotions and price reductions on high-in-fat, salt or sugar (HFSS) products in supermarkets. This policy was expected to roll out in October 2023, but has now been pushed back to October 2025. However, some supermarkets like Sainsbury's and Tesco have already begun implementing this.

It will be interesting to see how this will impact the FMCG market and the effect it will have locally on health.

This past year, organisations have had to contend with stricter regulations on food sourcing, production, and quality – which has led to greater demand for people specialising in quality assurance and control. Professionals in this field seeking new roles should be ready to demonstrate at interview stage how they have identified issues, developed well-defined standards and procedures that reduce variation, and improved the quality

of products, as these skills are highly prized by potential employers.

I would also urge professionals to stay up to date with market changes and trends. Join community groups, attend seminars and exhibitions, engage with others on LinkedIn and read industry newsletters. There are so many exciting things happening in this sector that it's important to stay abreast of the changes. This will also give you the opportunity to brush up on your skills and knowledge and highlight areas where you should focus your learning and development.

**Jack Yates**

Temporaries Consultant, Reed



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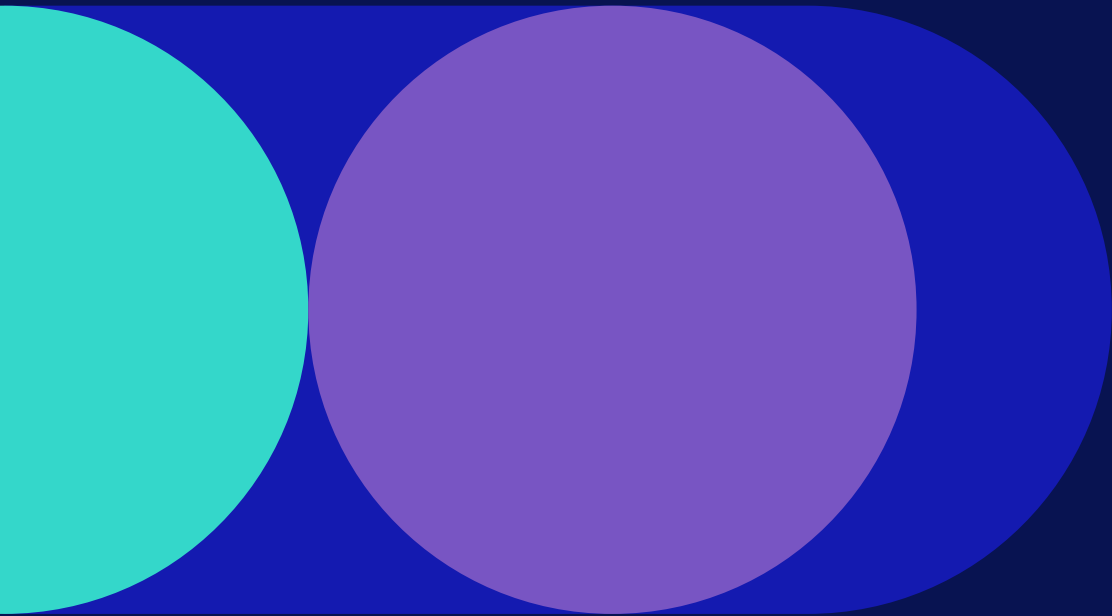
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