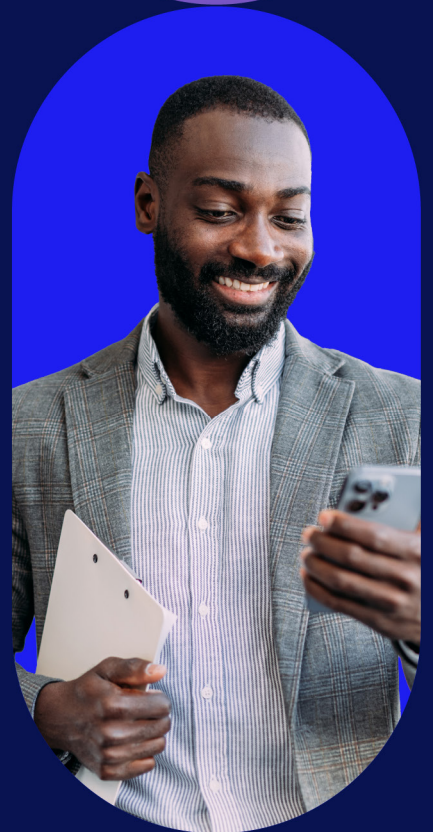
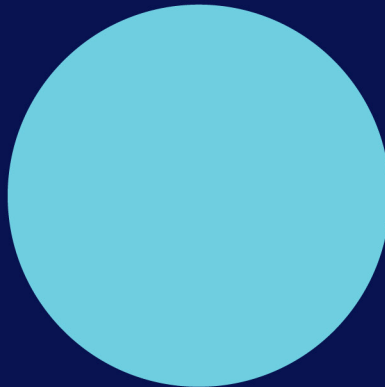
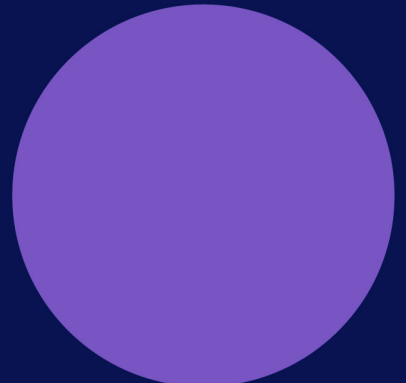
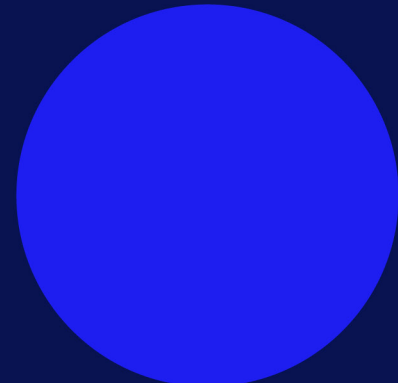


Reed
...



Salary guide 2026

**Accountancy &
finance practice**

Navigating the new jobs landscape



James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed

Welcome to our 2026 salary guides. As we look ahead, it is clear that the UK labour market is navigating one of the most profound transformations in living memory. In my four decades in recruitment, I have never witnessed a period of such rapid and fundamental change.

Our economic landscape has defied traditional expectations. Historically, periods of economic growth have aligned with rising job vacancies, but that relationship is no longer guaranteed. Recent trends suggest a structural shift in the labour market, where vacancy levels can decline even as the economy expands. This disconnect signals deeper changes in how businesses approach hiring and workforce planning. For employers and jobseekers alike, understanding these dynamics is critical - because the old assumption that growth equals more jobs is increasingly outdated.

The AI revolution: A white-collar recession

One of the primary drivers behind this permanent change to the jobs market, alongside policy, regulation, changing worker expectations, globalisation and supply chain pressures, I believe is artificial intelligence. The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.

AI is incredibly effective at reducing costs for employers, and it achieves this primarily by reducing the number of employees required. This is not a distant, future threat; it is happening right now. A recent survey we conducted of 500 companies revealed that 15%

were already reducing their hiring plans specifically because of the arrival of AI. Combined with other pressures, such as National Insurance increases and general hiring freezes, the overall impact on job creation has been noticeable.

We are witnessing what I term a 'white-collar recession,' which mirrors the blue-collar recession of the 1980s when automation hollowed out many industrial and manufacturing jobs. Today, it is entry-level and process-driven roles in sectors like administration, finance, and even law that are being consumed. These are the traditional gateways for many professionals starting their careers, and their rapid decline poses a significant threat to social mobility and future workforce development. The very nature of what constitutes a 'good job' is being redefined before our eyes. Roles that once seemed secure and promised a stable career path are now vulnerable to automation. This forces us, as employers and as a society, to rethink our approach to education, skills, and career progression.



The advancement and adoption of AI technologies have been breathtakingly fast, and its appetite for consuming tasks, particularly in white-collar professions, is the biggest story of our time.



The graduate dilemma: A shrinking horizon

Nowhere is this shift more acutely felt than among our young people and recent graduates. The data is deeply concerning. Our own figures at Reed show that the number of graduate jobs advertised on Reed.co.uk has plummeted from around 180,000 just a few years ago to a mere 50,000 at the end of 2025. This represents a staggering two-thirds reduction in opportunities for those leaving higher education. Other job sites are reporting similar, sobering figures. This is not just a dip; it is a collapse in the entry-level market.

This 'graduate crunch' is creating a generation of highly educated individuals who are struggling to find a foothold in the professional world. Nearly half of all jobs lost since mid-2024 have been among those under 25, and youth unemployment has soared to its highest level in a decade, excluding the pandemic period standing at 15.3%. The UK's top 100 employers reduced their graduate hiring by 14.6% in 2024, the steepest fall since the 2009 recession.

For those who do manage to secure a role, the rewards are often diminished. We are seeing entry-level graduate jobs offering salaries that are perilously close to the minimum wage, especially when factoring in the long hours often expected of new recruits. This situation challenges the long-held assumption that a university degree is a guaranteed ticket to a prosperous career. We must encourage aspiring families and young people to broaden their horizons. While a degree remains valuable, it is no longer the only path.

The jobs that are proving most resilient to the AI wave are those that require a human touch, creativity, and manual dexterity. Roles in skilled trades, hospitality, and healthcare, for example, involve a level of nuanced interaction and physical skill that AI is far from replicating. We must guide the next generation towards developing practical, hands-on skills. Learning to do things with your hands, whether in a highly educated field like osteopathy or a skilled trade, is becoming an increasingly wise career strategy.

Thriving through purpose: The PhilCo advantage

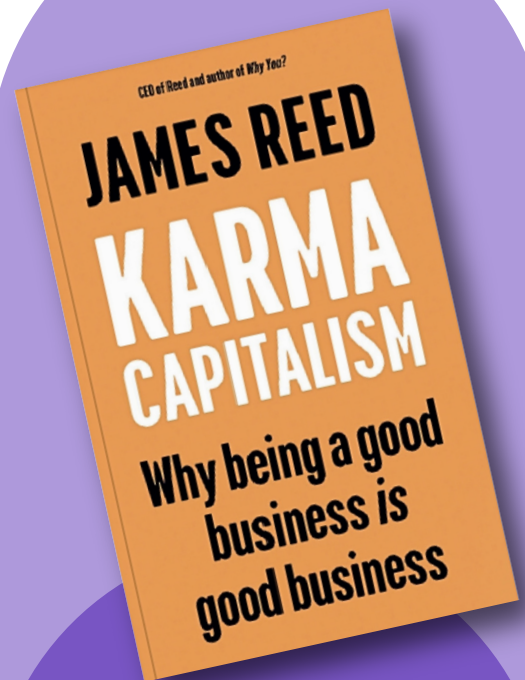
In this challenging environment, how can businesses not only survive but thrive? How can you attract and retain the talent you need when the market is so volatile? The answer, I believe, lies in purpose. Today's employees, especially the younger generation, are not just looking for a salary; they are seeking meaning and a sense of contribution from their work. This is where the concept of a philanthropic company, or PhilCo, becomes a powerful competitive advantage.

A **PhilCo** is a business that has committed a significant portion of its ownership - typically 10% or more - to a charitable foundation. At Reed, we are proud to be a PhilCo, with 18% of our company owned by the Reed Foundation. This is not just a footnote in our corporate structure; it is a

fundamental part of our identity. It means that a portion of our success is directly channelled back into the community. Our dividends help fund a wide array of good causes, many through our partnership with the Big Give, which has raised hundreds of millions for thousands of charities.

Being a PhilCo has a tangible and profound impact on our business. It is a cornerstone of our employee engagement strategy. Our team members - known as co-members - know that their hard work contributes to something larger than the bottom line. This shared purpose fosters a culture of responsibility, collaboration, and pride. It creates a powerful reason for people to join us and, just as importantly, to stay with us.

As hyper-capitalism has created vast inequalities - with the top one per cent in the UK holding more wealth than the bottom 70% - models like the PhilCo movement offer a way to transform business for good. It aligns profit with people and the planet, ensuring that corporate success contributes to societal wellbeing. This is not just corporate social responsibility; it is a sustainable and highly impactful business model for the 21st century.



Find out more about being a PhilCo in James' book 'Karma Capitalism, Why being a good business is good business'

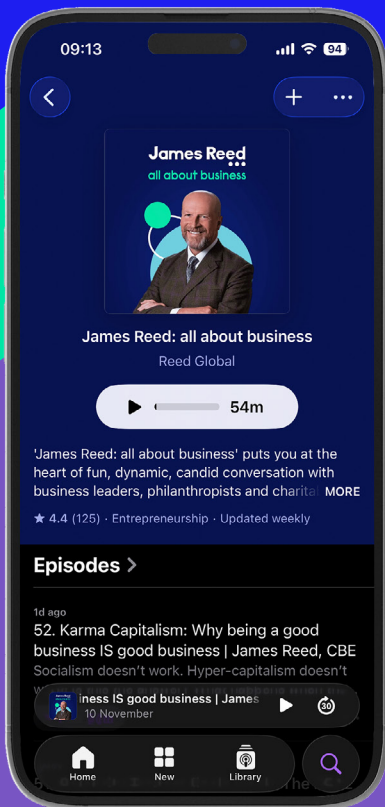
A look to the future

The road ahead is undoubtedly challenging. The forces of AI, economic uncertainty, and shifting market dynamics require us all to be more agile, more innovative, and more people centric than ever before. For employers, this means rethinking recruitment strategies. You must look beyond traditional qualifications and focus on skills, adaptability, resilience and potential. It means investing in upskilling and reskilling your existing workforce to meet the demands of the new economy. And it means building a strong employer brand rooted in a genuine purpose that will attract the best people.

For individuals, the message is clear: continuous learning is no longer optional. Developing a diverse skill set, particularly one that blends technical knowledge with people-centric abilities like communication, empathy, and critical thinking, will be crucial. We must all become lifelong learners to stay relevant and valuable in this evolving landscape.

These salary guides are designed to provide you with the data and insights you need to navigate this complex environment. They offer a benchmark for compensation in a time of great flux, helping you make informed decisions to attract and retain the talent that will drive your organisation forward. While the headlines may be daunting, there is always opportunity in disruption. By understanding these trends and adapting proactively, we can build a more resilient, skilled, and purposeful workforce for the future.

James Reed CBE
Chairman and CEO, Reed



Listen to James Reed's podcast 'all about business'.

Hosted by **James Reed CBE**, the Chairman and CEO of Reed Group, you'll hear the highs and lows of what it means to be a true business leader to empower you to implement smarter, more meaningful strategy in your business or career.

[Listen here](#)

Why use Reed's accountancy & finance practice 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 2026.



Extensive view

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



Superior insight

Our accountancy & finance practice expert provides key insight into the sector, with Reed's practice specialists 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.

Contents

Introduction	06	Corporate & indirect tax	24
Our survey says...	08	Is your package winning top talent?	27
Why Reed?	14	Corporate finance	28
Business services outsourcing	15	Corporate recovery & insolvency	31
Audit & assurance	18	Forensics & investigation	34
Personal tax	21	Looking for employee screening?	37

From pyramid to diamond: the reshaping of accountancy and finance

Michael Jones

Accountancy and Finance Practice Expert, Reed



The accountancy and finance practice market is at a crossroads. Economic caution, evolving candidate expectations, and the relentless advance of technology are creating a perfect storm of challenges and opportunities. Firms are finding themselves in a delicate balancing act, trying to attract scarce talent while managing tight budgets and planning for a future where traditional roles are being redefined.

The hiring paradox: caution in a candidate-driven market

A sense of caution has settled over the practice market. While the need for skilled professionals, particularly in tax and audit, remains high, firms are more hesitant and selective than ever when it comes to hiring. This has created a paradoxical situation where, despite a persistent talent shortage, even strong candidates are finding it harder to secure interviews and offers.

Firms are scrutinising applicants with a finer-toothed comb than in previous years. This increased carefulness is a direct response to economic uncertainty. With rising operational costs and squeezed margins, every hire is a significant investment, and businesses are determined to get it right the first time.

This cautious approach has led to a notable stagnation in salaries. For the first time in my memory, the upward trajectory of practice salaries has flattened. While the market is still fundamentally candidate-driven, the momentum has shifted slightly, giving employers a bit more leverage than they've had in the past.

Candidate expectations vs. employer realities

While employers are holding their cards close, expectations among professionals continue to evolve, creating a significant disconnect in several key areas.

The most prominent battleground is hybrid working. Accountancy and finance professionals, now accustomed to flexibility, see it as a standard expectation. Despite this, many practices, especially smaller ones, are pushing for a full return to the office. Their reasoning is often tied to cost control and a belief that an in-office presence is essential for collaboration and client service.

Interestingly, it's the larger, top-tier firms that are showing more flexibility. They recognise that offering hybrid work is a powerful retention tool. They empower their client-facing employees to plan meetings around their location, reducing unnecessary travel and improving work-life balance. For smaller firms, failing to offer this flexibility could mean losing top talent to their larger competitors.

Salaries also remain a major point of friction. People are facing a higher cost of living and naturally expect a significant pay rise to justify a career move. Yet, many firms are making low offers. This isn't necessarily a negotiation tactic. For many smaller practices, the money simply isn't there. Rising costs have crippled their ability to offer competitive salaries. This creates a challenging stalemate: professionals need more to move, but firms can't afford to offer it. The best advice I can give accountancy and finance firms that can afford it, is to put their best foot forward from the start. A strong initial offer demonstrates value and significantly increases the chance of securing their desired hire.

The unstoppable rise of AI and technology

Technology, particularly AI, is actively reshaping the structure of accountancy firms today. The impact is most profound at entry level. Transactional, process-driven roles, like bookkeeping, have been largely eliminated already by AI and automation.

This has prompted a fundamental shift in the traditional pyramid structure of accountancy firms. The base of the pyramid, once filled with junior staff handling repetitive tasks, is shrinking. The future model is predicted to look more like a diamond, with the bulk of employees in middle-management and advisory roles, supported by technology, and a leaner structure at both the top and bottom.

This raises a critical question: how will the next generation of accountants learn the fundamentals if the entry-level roles that taught them are disappearing?

On the other hand, this technological shift has increased the value of tech-savvy professionals. Firms are highly interested in part-qualified or newly qualified candidates who possess strong financial modelling and digital skills. The 'Making Tax Digital' initiative has already changed how practices operate, and proficiency with the latest software is essential.

Attracting and retaining top talent

In this complex market, how can firms stand out and keep their best people? The focus is shifting from purely financial incentives to a more holistic approach centred on culture, development, and reputation.

In a market saturated with small and medium-sized practices, reputation is everything. Jobseekers are diligent researchers.

They check Google and Glassdoor reviews, and they listen to word-of-mouth within the industry. The accountancy world is small, and a bad reputation travels fast. A strong, positive online presence is now a non-negotiable for any firm serious about attracting talent.

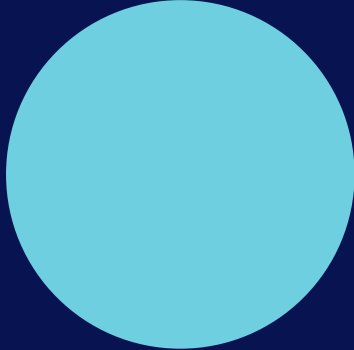
Beyond online reviews, the nature of a firm's client base can be a significant draw. Specialising in exciting or niche industries, like music or tech, can make a practice far more attractive to ambitious professionals looking for engaging work.

The untapped leverage: a path to partnership

One of the most powerful advantages practice firms have over in-house roles is the clear, structured path to partnership. This is a unique selling point that many firms are failing to leverage effectively. By mapping out a clear and credible career progression plan, practices can offer a long-term vision that industry roles often cannot match. This is a crucial strategy for preventing the best accountants from making the traditional move into commerce and industry

Ultimately, the most effective retention strategy is also your most powerful recruitment tool: looking after the employees you already have. Offering genuine flexible working, investing in professional development, and fostering a positive culture are key. When you focus on the internal employee experience, it doesn't just keep your team intact, it shines outwardly. This builds the very reputation you need to attract the next wave of accountancy and finance talent, making your practice a place where people want to build their careers.





Our survey says...

At the end of 2025, 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 are the top trends that the survey revealed:

1. Financial strain is widespread

The overwhelming reason for salary dissatisfaction (52% of unhappy respondents) is that pay hasn't kept pace with the cost of living. This far outweighs other factors, such as workload or industry pay.

- **Declining affordability:** Only a quarter of the population (25%) feels they're earning more in terms of what they can afford compared to four years ago, before the cost-of-living crisis.

- **Limited disposable income:** A concerning 26% of respondents have **£100 or less leftover** each month after essential bills, with seven per cent stating their entire salary goes to essentials. This highlights a struggle for many to save or enjoy non-essential spending.

2. The growing 'comfort gap'

There is a stark **£11,110.38 gap** between what people are currently earning and what they say is their comfortable living wage.

- **Desired vs. current earnings:** Our research found the average current annual salary is **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**.

3. Salary remains the dominant job motivator

To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of **£12,139.55**. This is significantly higher than the average **£3,923.62** pay rise that would satisfy them at their current employer, indicating a clear financial incentive is needed to overcome the inertia of changing roles.

- **Increased importance:** A vast majority (73%) report that salary is more important now when considering new job opportunities than it was before the cost-of-living crisis – 40% even say it’s “significantly more important”.
- **Higher progression expectations:** Nearly half of the 5,000 people surveyed (44%) have increased their expectations for salary progression within their current role over the last four years.

4. Benefits are secondary to cash

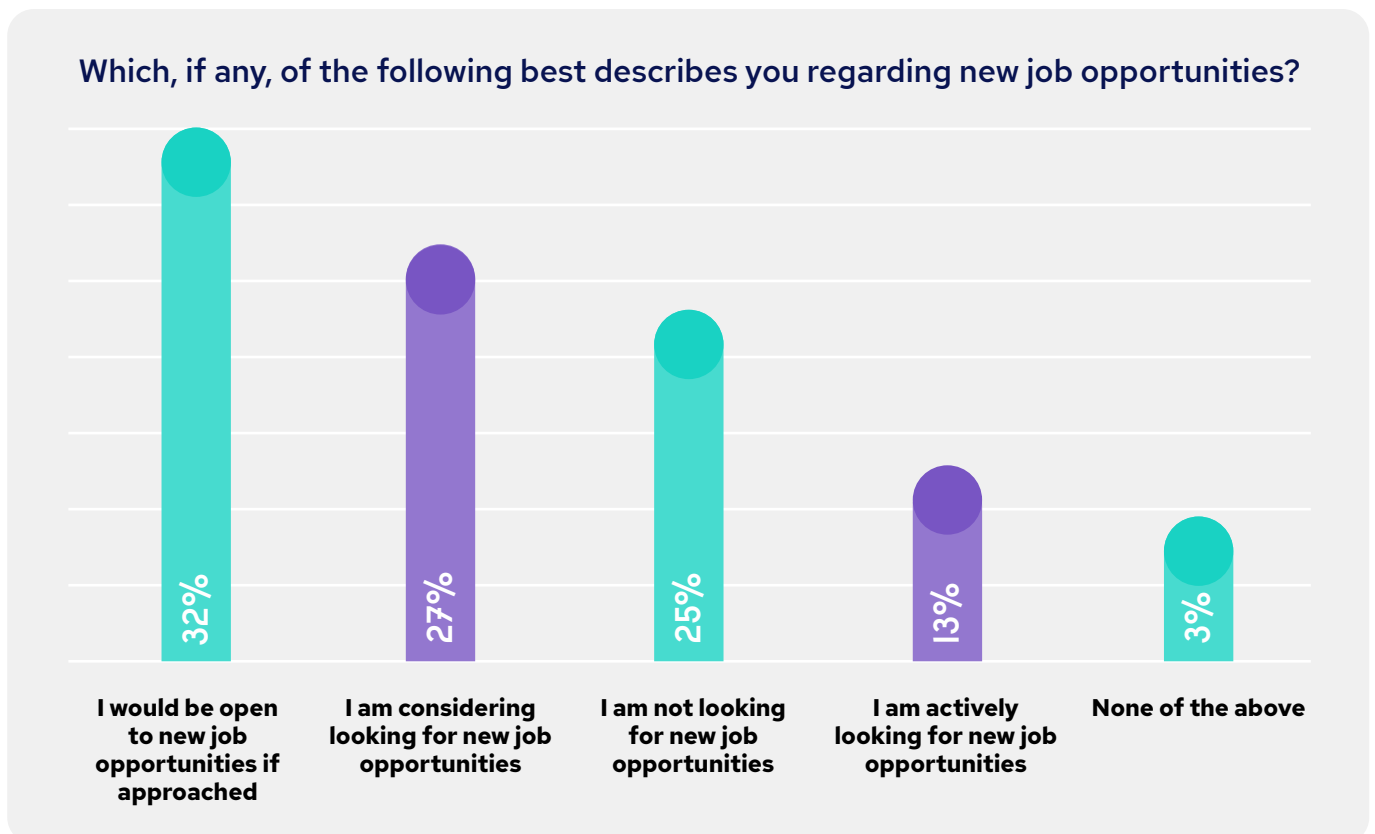
Many employees are willing to sacrifice ‘soft’ benefits like free refreshments (11%), cycle-to-work schemes (11%), onsite parking (eight per cent), and wellness programmes (seven per cent) for higher pay. Even some ‘harder’ benefits like health insurance are on the table for six per cent of those who took part.

- **Underutilised benefits:** Some commonly offered benefits, such as cycle-to-work schemes (11% unused) and the ability to purchase additional annual leave (seven per cent unused), are not being fully utilised by employees. This suggests that while benefits are appreciated, their perceived value can be lower than direct cash compensation, especially in the current financial climate.
- **Prevalence of benefits:** Common benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, 15% of respondents receive no benefits at all.

5. A highly mobile workforce

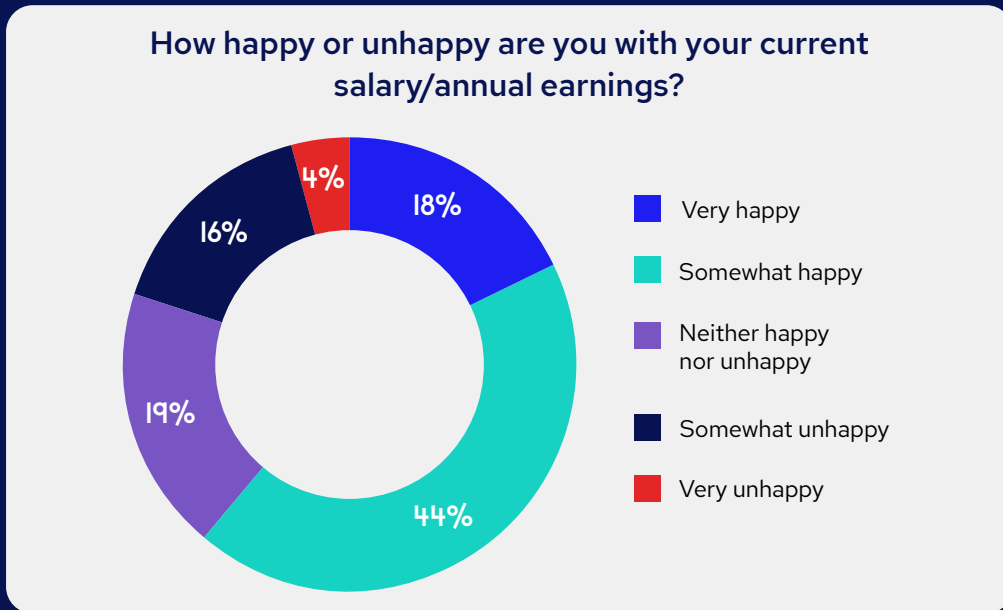
While the **average tenure is 8.54 years**, the high openness to new roles suggests that even long-serving employees are not immune to the pull of better compensation.

- **Open to new opportunities:** A significant majority (72%) of the workforce is considering a new role. A third (32%) are open to new job opportunities if approached, 27% are considering looking and 13% are actively looking. Only a quarter of employees (25%) are not looking for a new job opportunity at all.



Money, money, money

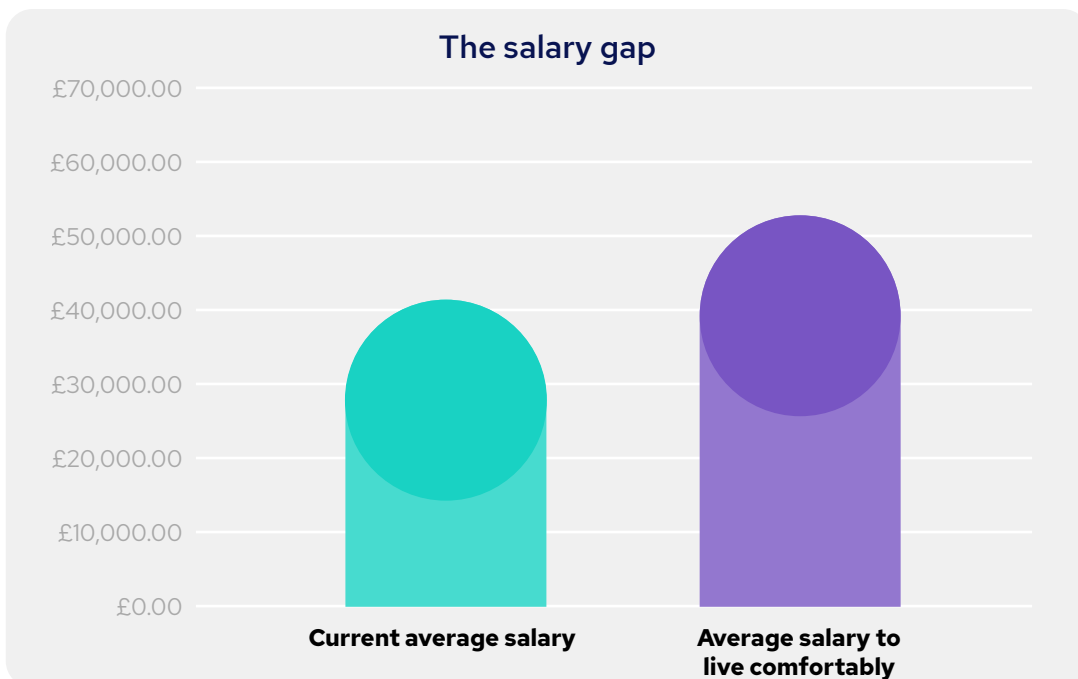
With ongoing cost-of-living challenges, salaries continue to be a huge area of discussion in the employment market, for both professionals and businesses. The data reveals the UK workforce is under significant financial pressure, with a clear and growing emphasis on salary as a primary driver of job satisfaction and career decisions.



Currently, over half (61%) of workers are happy with the pay they receive. However, that leaves a significant 20% of professionals feeling unhappy with their current salary, and another 19% feeling ambivalent (“neither happy nor unhappy”).

Of those who are unhappy, the overwhelming reason, cited by over half (52%), is that their pay hasn’t risen with the cost of living. Other key reasons include feeling they “do so much more than my job role” (39%), being “unable to save enough to meet my financial goals” (37%), and their salary “not being enough to live the lifestyle I want” (35%).

The disparity between the average current wage and the salary people would be comfortable with remains substantial. This year, the average current salary for survey respondents stands at **£40,638.35**. However, the average income people believe they need to live comfortably is **£51,748.73**, representing an average **£11,110.38 gap**. This ‘comfort gap’ indicates a widespread desire for higher earnings.



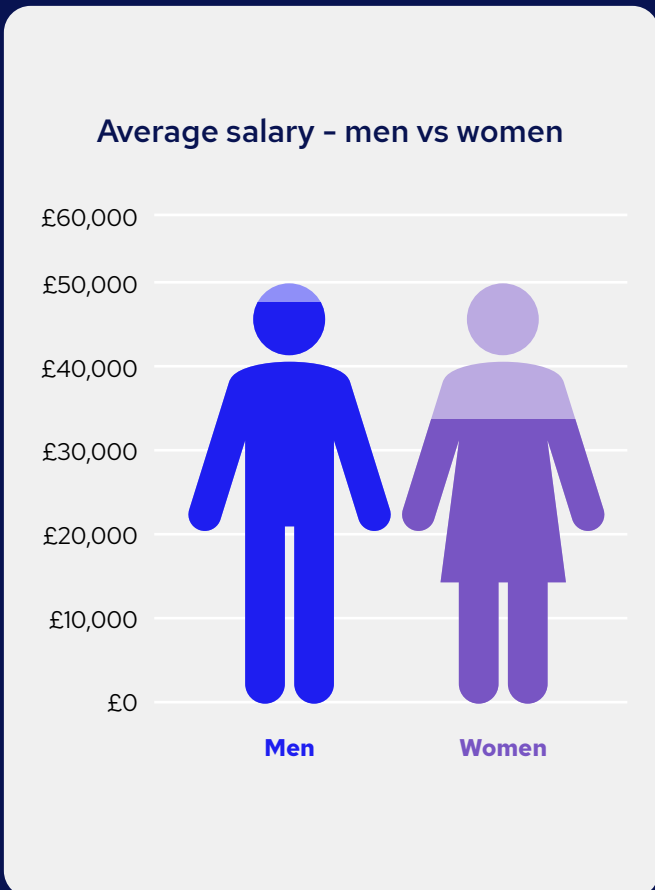
The financial strain is evident in monthly disposable income. A concerning **seven per cent of respondents have £0 leftover** each month after essential bills, with their entire salary going towards necessities. Overall, **26% have £100 or less remaining** for non-essential spending, savings, or leisure.



As a direct consequence of the financial climate as we enter 2026, 73% of professionals state that salary is more important now than it was before the cost-of-living crisis began in 2021, with 40% saying it is "significantly more important." Expectations for salary progression within the same role have also increased for 44% of workers. **To switch jobs, individuals expect a substantial average pay increase of £12,139.55.**

A deeper dive...

- Gender pay gap:** There remains a significant gender pay gap. The survey found that on average, men earn £48,367.15, while women earn £33,852.12, **a difference of over £14,500**. This disparity extends to satisfaction: 66% of men are happy with their salary compared to 57% of women, and women are more unhappy (24%) than men (16%). Men also perceive a higher comfortable salary (£59,688.07) than women (£44,707.25).
- Disposable income gap:** Women have significantly less disposable income, with an average of £626.61 left over monthly compared to £983.38 for men. Women are also twice as likely to have £0 leftover.
- Age and earnings:** Current salaries peak in the 25-34 age group (£49,853.43), while the desired comfortable income peaks in the 25-34 age group (£65,341.10). Salary satisfaction is highest for younger workers (18-34) and lowest for the 45-54 age group, where only 51% are happy with their pay. This 45-54 age group also reports the highest percentage (9%) with £0 leftover monthly.
- Job mobility:** Younger workers (18-34) are most willing to change jobs for salary increases, while older workers (55+) are significantly less likely to change jobs for more money, indicating that other factors become more important with age.



All about the benefits

While offering a higher salary remains the most direct way to attract and retain employees, the benefits package also plays a role, especially for businesses unable to match top-tier salaries. **However, 15% of respondents currently say they receive no workplace benefits at all.**

Commonly offered benefits include onsite parking (27%), hybrid working (23%), and Christmas shutdown (21%). However, there's a noticeable disconnect between offered and desired benefits, and also a willingness to sacrifice many perks for higher pay.



A deeper dive...

- **Sacrificing perks for pay:** Many employees are willing to sacrifice 'soft' benefits for higher pay. Free refreshments (11%) and cycle to work schemes (11%) are the benefits most employees would be willing to give up.
- **Age and benefits:** Younger workers (25-34) are most willing to sacrifice benefits for higher pay, while older workers (55+) are significantly less willing to do so, suggesting they value their existing benefits more.
- **Gender benefit gap:** Women are more likely to receive no benefits (17% vs. 12% for men) and, on average, men report receiving more benefits overall.

Key takeaways for businesses:

Over two-thirds of professionals (72%) are currently looking or open to looking for a new job – highlighting a critical need for businesses to audit what they are offering their current and future talent. The primary drivers for this job market engagement are financial, with the cost-of-living crisis acting as a significant catalyst.



Address the 'comfort gap': The £11,110.38 gap between current and desired comfortable income is a major source of dissatisfaction and a driver of job mobility. Competitive salaries are no longer just about attracting talent but retaining it.



Targeted retention: Mid-career professionals (25-44) are a high-risk group, demanding the largest pay increases to switch jobs and showing the highest increase in salary progression expectations. Retention strategies must be robust for this segment.



Acknowledge gender disparities: The significant gender pay gap, lower salary satisfaction, and reduced financial flexibility for women are critical issues. Businesses must address these disparities to foster equity and retain female talent.



Strategic benefits offerings: While salary is king, benefits can still make a difference. However, businesses should evaluate the relevance and perceived value of their benefits packages. Many employees are willing to sacrifice less-valued benefits for higher pay, suggesting that resources might be better allocated to more impactful perks or direct compensation.



Prioritise financial wellbeing: The struggle to meet financial obligations and save for goals is widespread. Benefits that directly support financial wellbeing (e.g., better pensions, performance bonuses) are likely to be highly valued, especially when employees are willing to trade other perks for them.

The current economic climate has made salary a paramount concern for the majority of the UK workforce. Businesses that fail to recognise and adapt to these heightened financial expectations and disparities risk losing valuable talent in a highly mobile job market.





Your specialist

recruitment partner

We've pioneered specialist recruitment since 1960.

Each year we help tens of thousands of businesses find the talent they need to flourish.



Access to over 366,000 temporary workers across the UK



24/7, UK-based, fast, efficient pre-employment screening



Local market knowledge, with recruiters in 100 locations across the UK



Recruitment experts covering 20 sectors

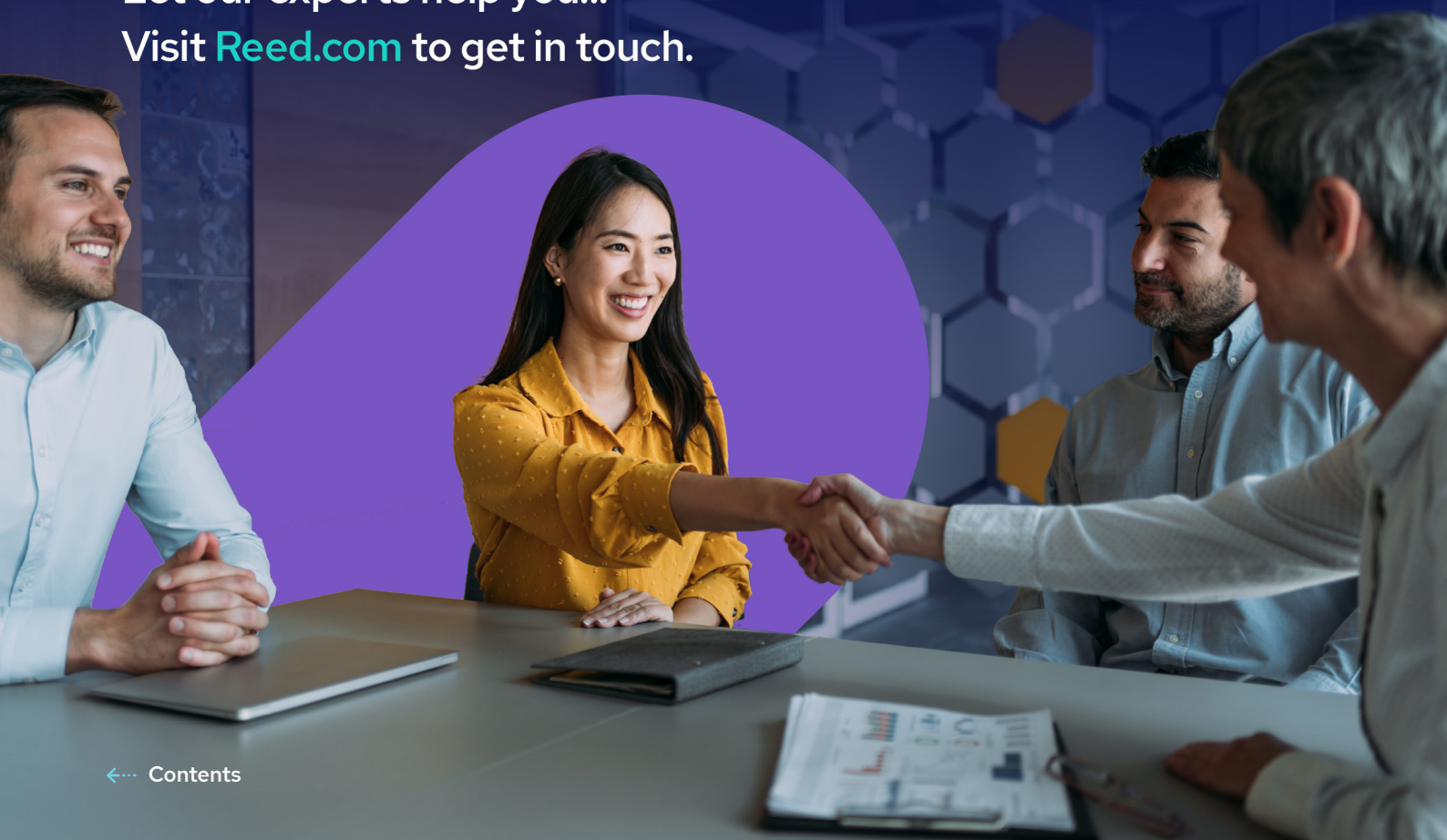


Candidate database of over 22 million CVs



Longest guarantees on the market - up to 18 months

Let our experts help you...
Visit [Reed.com](https://www.reed.com) to get in touch.



Business services outsourcing



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£98,280	£152,880	£92,820	£138,705	£98,280	£179,655
Senior Manager	£67,100	£88,400	£68,100	£93,600	£68,100	£91,500
Manager	£58,200	£68,800	£42,100	£60,800	£60,800	£71,800
Assistant Manager	£46,800	£57,200	£33,300	£44,200	£49,400	£60,800
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,600	£52,000	£30,700	£38,500	£46,300	£53,000
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£25,500	£39,500	£24,800	£30,700	£29,600	£42,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£25,500	£30,700	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£31,700
AAT/CAT Qualified	£27,600	£33,300	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£38,500
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£28,600

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£104,265	£173,670	£75,390	£138,705	£77,490	£150,675
Senior Manager	£71,800	£88,400	£55,100	£71,800	£58,200	£60,800
Manager	£57,200	£67,100	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£57,200
Assistant Manager	£49,400	£60,800	£35,400	£46,300	£39,500	£46,300
Senior (newly qualified)	£40,600	£48,400	£30,700	£38,500	£33,300	£39,500
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,500	£42,100	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Qualified	£25,500	£33,300	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£27,600
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Business services outsourcing



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£109,725	£86,835	£173,670	£98,280	£156,135
Senior Manager	£58,200	£69,700	£49,400	£71,800	£79,600	£93,600
Manager	£42,100	£49,400	£46,300	£57,200	£55,100	£66,000
Assistant Manager	£35,400	£44,200	£36,400	£49,400	£48,400	£57,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£32,200	£38,500	£33,300	£42,100	£44,200	£49,400
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£25,500	£33,300	£24,800	£33,300	£27,600	£42,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£24,800	£27,600
AAT/CAT Qualified	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£28,600	£27,600	£33,300
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

South West

Wales

West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£86,835	£144,690	£69,300	£138,915	£75,390	£138,705	£75,390	£150,675
Senior Manager	£58,200	£82,700	£55,100	£71,800	£49,400	£66,000	£53,000	£66,000
Manager	£46,300	£60,800	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100	£46,300	£57,200
Assistant Manager	£42,100	£49,400	£35,400	£44,200	£35,400	£48,400	£42,100	£51,000
Senior (newly qualified)	£35,400	£44,200	£30,700	£38,500	£33,300	£38,500	£30,700	£39,500
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£24,800	£35,400	£24,800	£30,700	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Qualified	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Business services outsourcing insight



Natalie Harden

Business Services Outsourcing Expert, Reed

//

The UK's outsourced accounting and finance landscape is undergoing a significant transformation. Once viewed primarily as a cost-saving measure, outsourcing is now a strategic tool for businesses aiming to improve efficiency, access specialised expertise, and drive growth. This shift is fuelled by several key trends, including rapid digitalisation, persistent talent shortages, and evolving regulatory demands like Making Tax Digital (MTD).

A key driver of this change is the increasing demand for more strategic input from outsourcing partners. Clients no longer just want their books managed; they expect proactive, consultative advice to help them navigate challenges and identify opportunities. This requires professionals with strong commercial acumen and the ability to act as business partners to senior stakeholders. Consequently, there is a growing need for people who are not only technically proficient with cloud-based software but also possess strong advisory and client-facing skills.

However, the market faces a significant challenge: a chronic shortage of qualified professionals. While this scarcity is a primary driver for organisations turning to outsourced

solutions, it also affects the practice firms themselves. The talent shortage persists across all service lines, making it difficult for accountancy practices to meet growing demand. In response, firms are evolving their employee value propositions to attract and retain talented employees. Benefits packages are becoming more competitive, featuring flexible working arrangements, enhanced holiday allowances, and salaries that are catching up with – and in some cases exceeding – those for in-house roles.

The outsourcing market offers both opportunities and challenges. Advancements in AI and automation, along with a shift toward higher-value advisory services, enable firms to prioritise strategic client relationships over routine tasks. The expansion of MTD and a new focus on environmental, social and governance (ESG) reporting also create new service opportunities.

Firms that succeed in 2026, will be those that can successfully attract professionals with the right blend of technological and advisory skills, while adapting to a market where outsourcing is an integral part of business strategy. //

Audit & assurance



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£105,000	£199,500	£92,820	£133,245	£109,725	£242,970
Senior Manager	£65,000	£70,000	£60,800	£82,700	£82,700	£99,300
Manager	£50,000	£60,000	£46,300	£64,000	£66,000	£77,000
Assistant Manager	£42,000	£53,000	£29,600	£49,400	£60,800	£68,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£38,000	£45,000	£33,300	£39,500	£49,400	£60,800
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,000	£38,000	£24,800	£30,700	£29,600	£44,200
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£34,300
AAT/CAT Qualified	£25,000	£35,000	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£35,400
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£28,600

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£98,280	£213,990	£75,390	£138,705	£77,490	£177,975
Senior Manager	£83,700	£99,300	£55,100	£71,800	£58,200	£66,000
Manager	£61,900	£73,800	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£58,200
Assistant Manager	£45,200	£56,200	£35,400	£46,300	£39,500	£46,300
Senior (newly qualified)	£40,600	£47,300	£30,700	£37,400	£33,300	£39,500
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,500	£42,100	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Qualified	£25,500	£33,300	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£28,600
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Audit & assurance



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£112,455	£90,090	£185,115	£115,710	£196,560
Senior Manager	£58,200	£69,700	£52,000	£82,700	£82,700	£93,600
Manager	£38,500	£53,000	£44,100	£66,000	£60,800	£71,800
Assistant Manager	£35,400	£46,300	£37,400	£53,000	£52,000	£55,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£30,700	£38,500	£35,400	£44,200	£49,400	£53,000
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£25,500	£34,300	£24,800	£30,700	£30,200	£42,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£30,700	£24,800	£28,600
AAT/CAT Qualified	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£28,600	£27,600	£33,300
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£27,600

South West

Wales

West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£83,580	£144,690	£69,300	£138,705	£69,300	£173,670	£92,820	£177,975
Senior Manager	£58,200	£82,700	£55,100	£71,800	£49,400	£71,800	£53,000	£66,000
Manager	£46,300	£66,000	£46,300	£55,100	£42,100	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£42,100	£49,400	£35,400	£46,300	£36,000	£46,500	£42,100	£51,000
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£46,300	£30,700	£35,400	£32,500	£40,000	£30,700	£39,500
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£24,800	£33,300	£26,000	£30,700	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Qualified	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500
AAT/CAT Foundation/Intermediate	n/a	n/a	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Audit & assurance insight

Laura Wilson

Audit & Assurance Expert, Reed



//

The audit and assurance sector has long been a cornerstone of accountancy practice, and the movement of newly qualified auditors into industry roles is nothing new, it's been a well-trodden path for decades. This shift isn't typically driven by poor retention; most firms successfully support their employees through qualification. Rather, the appeal of higher salaries and broader career opportunities in industry has always made it a natural next step after qualifications have been achieved. What is changing, is the competitive landscape - firms are increasingly enhancing their talent strategies to retain people for longer.

While salary continues to be a critical factor, firms are responding by improving their overall packages. Enhancing benefits and structuring more comprehensive career paths can help narrow the gap. There is a growing trend of practices adding more defined progression steps, such as creating new roles like assistant manager, that not only

support development but offer clear, tangible career ladders for ambitious professionals.

In addition, flexibility has emerged as one of the most valued benefits, rivalling even salary in importance. Those companies that provide hybrid or flexible working arrangements are well positioned to attract and retain talented auditors. This advantage is further highlighted as some industry employers call people back to the office full time, making flexibility within practice a unique selling point.

Ultimately, the demand for skilled auditors remains strong - especially those with three or more years of experience. Practice firms that continue to innovate - through flexibility, competitive packages, and clearer career progression - will be best placed to attract and retain audit professionals, even as enticing opportunities outside of practice continue to appear. //

Personal tax



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£73,500	£168,000	£73,185	£104,265	£113,610	£300,825
Senior Manager	£60,000	£85,000	£55,100	£71,800	£77,000	£99,300
Manager	£50,000	£70,000	£43,000	£50,000	£60,800	£71,800
Assistant Manager	£47,000	£60,000	£35,000	£42,500	£53,000	£61,900
Senior (newly qualified)	£39,500	£45,000	£30,700	£37,400	£42,100	£55,100
CTA Qualified	£40,000	£60,000	£36,400	£49,400	£55,100	£66,000
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£35,000	£43,000	£24,800	£30,700	£35,400	£44,200
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£29,700	£38,900	£24,800	£30,700	£28,600	£42,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£28,600

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£97,230	£179,655	£75,390	£104,265	£77,490	£115,710
Senior Manager	£69,700	£94,600	£55,100	£66,000	£55,100	£66,000
Manager	£58,200	£69,700	£38,500	£49,400	£33,300	£44,200
Assistant Manager	£45,200	£57,200	£33,300	£40,600	£30,700	£36,400
Senior (newly qualified)	£37,400	£47,300	£29,600	£38,500	£27,600	£28,600
CTA Qualified	£55,100	£66,000	£38,500	£55,100	£49,400	£60,800
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£30,700	£40,600	£24,800	£25,500	£33,300	£44,200
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,500	£42,100	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Personal tax



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£78,645	£115,710	£83,580	£173,670	£86,835	£162,120
Senior Manager	£52,000	£60,800	£47,300	£71,800	£66,000	£82,700
Manager	£37,400	£53,000	£43,200	£60,800	£55,100	£68,100
Assistant Manager	£33,300	£42,100	£35,400	£49,400	£47,300	£55,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£29,600	£36,400	£30,700	£39,500	£44,200	£48,400
CTA Qualified	£36,400	£42,100	£42,100	£68,100	£55,100	£66,000
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£34,300	£24,800	£30,700	£30,700	£40,600
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£24,800	£34,300	£24,800	£30,700	£27,600	£42,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£24,800	£28,600

South West

Wales

West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£71,505	£115,710	£75,390	£127,260	£69,300	£115,710	£69,300	£115,710
Senior Manager	£58,200	£82,700	£55,100	£71,800	£46,300	£66,000	£46,300	£69,700
Manager	£44,200	£60,800	£44,200	£55,100	£42,000	£60,000	£33,300	£44,200
Assistant Manager	£39,500	£53,000	£35,400	£44,200	£37,500	£45,000	£33,300	£42,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£49,400	£28,600	£33,300	£33,500	£38,000	£24,800	£28,600
CTA Qualified	£47,300	£60,800	£44,200	£57,200	£36,400	£42,100	£42,100	£60,800
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£36,400	£24,800	£30,700	£24,800	£27,600	£27,600	£38,500
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,500	£37,400	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Personal tax insight

Michael Jones

Personal Tax Expert, Reed



//

The personal tax sector is facing a unique set of challenges, primarily driven by a shrinking talent pool. Demand for tax professionals remains steady, particularly with ongoing changes to tax legislation, but firms are encountering significant difficulties in sourcing qualified people. This scarcity is creating a cautious and highly selective hiring environment.

A key factor contributing to the talent shortage is the perception of personal tax work. Many people view it as less engaging than corporate tax, often involving repetitive tasks for individuals or several high-net-worth clients, rather than complex, strategic challenges. This perception issue, makes it harder for firms to attract new professionals

into this specialism, further reducing the number of available candidates.

On the other hand, it does present an opportunity for firms to reshape the narrative around personal tax work. By emphasising the diverse challenges it offers, such as navigating intricate tax regulations, offering tailored solutions to clients, and managing unique situations, firms can highlight the intellectual engagement and problem-solving skills involved. Additionally, showcasing the potential for strong client relationships and the satisfaction of having meaningful financial impact can help attract professionals who value direct, personalised interactions and making a tangible difference. //

Corporate & indirect tax



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£73,500	£168,000	£80,850	£104,265	£107,520	£300,825
Senior Manager	£60,000	£85,000	£60,800	£77,000	£82,700	£104,500
Manager	£50,000	£70,000	£44,200	£57,200	£66,000	£82,700
Assistant Manager	£47,000	£60,000	£35,000	£42,000	£51,000	£66,000
Senior (newly qualified)	£38,000	£45,000	£30,700	£39,500	£44,200	£60,800
CTA Qualified	£40,000	£60,000	£36,400	£49,400	£55,100	£71,800
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£35,000	£43,000	£24,800	£30,700	£38,500	£46,300
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£26,000	£25,500	£30,700

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£98,280	£180,705	£75,390	£138,705	£77,490	£162,120
Senior Manager	£73,800	£93,600	£55,100	£71,800	£55,100	£66,000
Manager	£59,800	£77,000	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£45,200	£58,200	£35,400	£46,300	£38,500	£46,300
Senior (newly qualified)	£40,600	£49,400	£30,700	£38,500	£30,700	£38,500
CTA Qualified	£55,100	£71,800	£40,600	£60,800	£53,000	£66,000
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£33,300	£44,200	£24,800	£27,600	£38,500	£44,200
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£27,600

Corporate & indirect tax



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£115,710	£90,090	£185,115	£98,280	£177,975
Senior Manager	£51,000	£72,800	£52,000	£74,900	£71,800	£88,400
Manager	£32,200	£55,100	£44,200	£71,800	£57,200	£71,800
Assistant Manager	£38,500	£49,400	£35,400	£49,400	£53,000	£57,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£28,600	£36,400	£33,300	£44,200	£44,200	£55,100
CTA Qualified	£36,400	£42,100	£44,200	£71,800	£55,100	£66,000
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£31,200	£33,300	£44,200
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£24,800	£28,600

South West

Wales

West Midlands

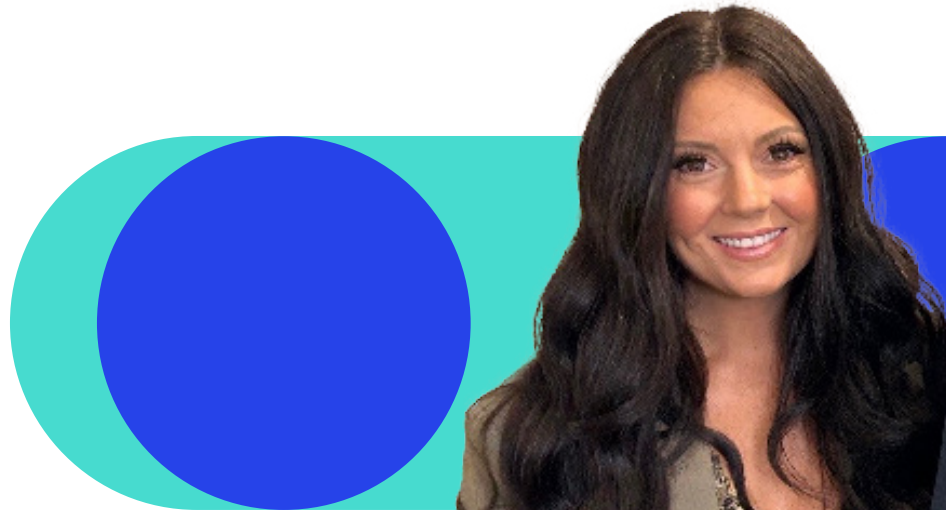
Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£115,710	£80,850	£138,705	£75,390	£173,670	£92,820	£138,705
Senior Manager	£58,200	£82,700	£66,000	£77,000	£56,000	£75,000	£55,100	£69,700
Manager	£44,200	£60,800	£49,400	£64,000	£44,200	£60,800	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£39,500	£53,000	£35,400	£46,300	£37,500	£45,000	£38,500	£49,400
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£49,400	£30,700	£38,500	£33,500	£38,000	£30,700	£38,500
CTA Qualified	£49,400	£66,000	£44,200	£57,200	£36,400	£42,100	£42,100	£60,800
CTA Foundation/Intermediate	£27,600	£37,400	£24,800	£30,700	£24,800	£27,600	£27,600	£38,500
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£26,000	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Corporate & indirect tax insight

Mercedes Horton

Corporate & Indirect Tax Expert, Reed



Accountancy and finance practices are currently navigating a highly competitive market for tax specialists, defined by a limited talent pool and evolving workplace expectations. This scarcity keeps salaries competitive, but firms face significant challenges in securing the right expertise, particularly at senior levels.

A key factor shaping the hiring landscape is the adoption of hybrid working. While most of the top 100 firms offer flexible models as standard, many SMEs are mandating a full-time office presence. This creates a disconnect, placing smaller firms at a disadvantage and intensifying their recruitment struggles in an already tight market. Simultaneously, AI and cloud-based accounting software is reshaping team structures, reducing the demand for junior compliance roles, while increasing the need for strategic, advisory-focused professionals.

Two areas are experiencing particularly acute demand. Indirect tax remains one of the most talent-short specialisms across firms of all sizes. The shortage is so pronounced, that organisations are struggling to fill roles from junior to senior manager, and are increasingly open to considering those with an HMRC background.





Similarly, corporate tax is a major focus for investment, especially in the North. Client expectations have shifted beyond routine annual computations, driving a need for proactive advisory services. Firms are keen to build out their corporate tax teams to meet this demand for strategic guidance. For experienced tax professionals, this climate presents an excellent opportunity to explore new roles with competitive terms and greater flexibility. //

Does your salary and benefits package help you attract and retain critical talent?

With access to data from over 18 million jobs and market-leading talent analytics tools, our talent advisory team helps you assess your rewards against data insights and real-time salary and benefits expectations for any role, in any sector.

We go beyond just benchmarking, ensuring your reward proposition supports your organisational strategy. Our salary benchmarking services provide comprehensive support to build a reward structure that attracts, retains, and motivates employees.

We deliver:

-  Bespoke salary benchmarking reports tailored to your roles and sectors, helping with critical talent planning.
-  Salary and benefits analysis to uncover gaps and opportunities, futureproof your structures, and inform future organisational design.
-  Analysis of reward challenges to understand and address attraction and retention barrier.
-  Tailored recommendations and implementation support to strengthen your strategy.

Make sure your reward structure is fit for the future.

 [Find out more about our benchmarking services here](#)





East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£87,885	£157,500	£86,835	£143,640	£107,520	£358,680
Senior Manager	£60,000	£80,000	£58,200	£79,600	£79,600	£110,200
Manager	£50,000	£70,000	£42,100	£55,100	£66,000	£82,700
Assistant Manager	£45,000	£55,000	£35,400	£42,100	£55,100	£67,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£40,000	£50,000	£26,500	£38,500	£51,000	£60,800
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£30,700

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£96,075	£239,715	£92,820	£177,975	£92,820	£177,975
Senior Manager	£73,800	£93,600	£60,800	£88,400	£55,100	£88,400
Manager	£55,100	£75,900	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£47,300	£59,300	£33,300	£44,200	£33,300	£44,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£57,200	£28,600	£33,300	£30,700	£33,300
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£77,490	£115,710	£86,835	£185,115	£92,820	£185,115
Senior Manager	£58,200	£75,900	£49,400	£79,600	£71,800	£91,500
Manager	£46,300	£58,200	£44,200	£71,800	£57,200	£70,700
Assistant Manager	£45,200	£59,300	£35,400	£49,400	£44,200	£55,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£31,700	£37,400	£33,300	£44,200	£39,500	£49,400
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£25,000	£28,600

South West

Wales

West Midlands

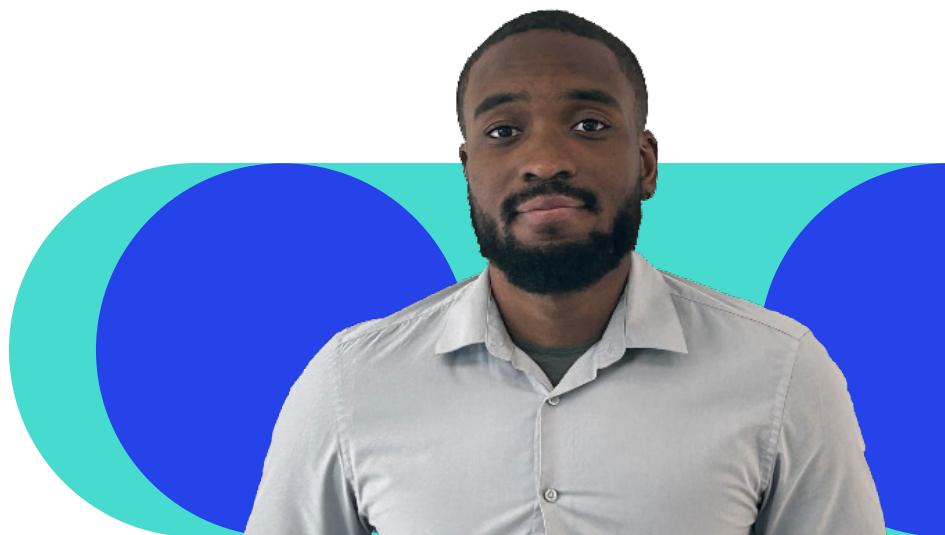
Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£92,820	£185,115	£80,850	£127,260	£80,850	£173,670	£92,820	£177,975
Senior Manager	£62,900	£82,700	£58,200	£71,800	£55,100	£82,700	£55,100	£88,400
Manager	£53,000	£66,000	£44,200	£60,800	£44,200	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£44,200	£60,800	£35,400	£42,100	£33,300	£49,400	£33,300	£44,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£49,400	£27,600	£35,400	£28,600	£35,400	£27,600	£33,300
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Corporate finance insight

Shaq Hills

Corporate Finance Expert, Reed



//

The corporate finance sector within accountancy and finance practices is currently defined by a significant talent shortage. Finding and attracting qualified professionals is the primary challenge for firms, as the candidate pool is exceptionally niche and limited. To retain the people they do have, companies are finding that offering flexibility, particularly through hybrid working arrangements, is crucial.

Professionals are also driven by the desire for varied experience, often seeking roles that offer exposure to both the buy and sell side of transactions, which may not be available within their current firm. Therefore, employers should ensure they are effectively communicating their unique value proposition, career development pathways, and opportunities for cross-functional experience.

In response to the scarcity of professionals on the active job market, some firms are adopting a more flexible approach to hiring. They are beginning to consider applicants from adjacent fields, such as audit, who possess valuable transferable skills. This strategy widens the talent pool and creates new pathways into corporate finance for ambitious individuals. An area seeing particular activity is transaction services, where opportunities are emerging for people without direct experience but with a relevant background.

Looking ahead, the demand for skilled corporate finance professionals is expected to remain consistently strong. Despite market fluctuations, there is an enduring need for expertise in this area and the outlook for the next six- to-12 months suggests a stable market. //

Corporate recovery & insolvency



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£94,500	£173,250	£63,840	£104,265	£109,725	£194,355
Senior Manager	£79,000	£88,500	£44,200	£58,200	£67,100	£95,700
Manager	£51,000	£65,000	£40,600	£53,000	£61,900	£78,500
Assistant Manager	£46,500	£57,700	£30,700	£43,200	£53,000	£65,000
Senior (newly qualified)	£32,000	£45,000	£26,500	£38,500	£47,300	£55,100
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£30,000	£24,800	£26,500	£25,500	£30,700

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£97,230	£160,020	£80,850	£138,705	£92,820	£138,705
Senior Manager	£66,000	£95,700	£60,800	£77,000	£66,000	£88,400
Manager	£58,200	£75,900	£44,200	£55,100	£49,400	£66,000
Assistant Manager	£52,000	£59,300	£35,400	£46,300	£38,500	£44,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£46,300	£52,000	£27,600	£35,400	£33,300	£36,400
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Corporate recovery & insolvency



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£102,060	£84,630	£173,670	£96,075	£162,120
Senior Manager	£53,000	£64,000	£46,300	£71,800	£69,700	£93,600
Manager	£39,500	£53,000	£43,200	£60,800	£59,300	£77,000
Assistant Manager	£35,400	£40,600	£33,300	£47,300	£49,400	£58,200
Senior (newly qualified)	£26,500	£35,400	£30,700	£39,500	£42,100	£51,000
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£24,800	£25,500

South West

Wales

West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£86,835	£156,135	£80,850	£104,265	£80,850	£138,705	£92,820	£138,705
Senior Manager	£62,900	£82,700	£60,800	£69,700	£55,100	£77,000	£66,000	£88,400
Manager	£53,000	£72,800	£42,100	£55,100	£44,200	£66,000	£49,400	£66,000
Assistant Manager	£39,500	£55,100	£35,400	£49,400	£35,400	£44,200	£33,300	£49,400
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£51,000	£27,600	£35,400	£30,700	£38,500	£27,600	£33,300
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£26,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Corporate recovery & insolvency insight

Calvin Knighton

Corporate Recovery & Insolvency Expert, Reed



//

While economic headwinds are increasing caseloads, particularly in the retail and construction sectors, firms are prioritising measured growth. The primary demand is for advisory and turnaround specialists who can provide commercial solutions before formal insolvency proceedings begin. This has created a need for agile professionals at manager and senior manager level who can handle both advisory work, such as independent business reviews, and traditional trading administrations.

Technical expertise, particularly in cash flow modelling, is now a critical skill. With borrowing costs high, the ability to build robust short-term forecasts is highly valued. However, firms are increasingly focused on potential employees demonstrating commercial acumen and emotional intelligence. The modern practitioner must build trust in distressed environments, making interpersonal skills just as important as technical qualifications like the Joint Insolvency Exam Board (JIEB). This blend of personal and technical abilities is commanding a premium in a market where there are fewer professionals actively looking for new roles.

Talent attraction continues to pose a significant challenge for accounting firms, with a noticeable experience gap at the three-to-six-year level. To combat this, practices are improving their employee value propositions and benefits packages by promoting flexible working, offering clear career progression routes, and generous signing bonuses. Retention is now a core focus for many, with a shift away from high-pressure environments towards structured mentorship and investment in technology to automate administrative tasks.

Regulatory changes, including increased scrutiny on pre-pack administrations and HMRC's status as a preferential creditor, are also shaping team structures. This has increased the need for strong negotiators and dedicated compliance specialists. Entering 2026, the 'war for talent' is set to intensify, with retention strategies and the quality of work on offer becoming key differentiators for firms seeking to attract and keep the best people. //

Forensics & investigations



East Anglia

East Midlands

London

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£135,975	£183,750	£61,110	£106,470	£106,470	£210,735
Senior Manager	£69,750	£74,400	£44,200	£60,800	£84,800	£100,400
Manager	£55,800	£65,000	£44,200	£53,000	£60,800	£85,800
Assistant Manager	£45,000	£55,000	£30,700	£40,600	£55,100	£61,900
Senior (newly qualified)	£38,000	£44,000	£26,500	£38,500	£46,300	£56,200
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£32,000	£38,000	£26,500	£37,400	£31,700	£43,200
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£25,500	£30,700

Greater London

North East

North West

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£93,870	£157,290	£98,280	£115,710	£80,850	£150,675
Senior Manager	£68,100	£93,600	£71,800	£88,400	£55,100	£77,000
Manager	£55,100	£68,100	£55,100	£66,000	£44,200	£55,100
Assistant Manager	£47,300	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100	£35,400	£46,300
Senior (newly qualified)	£42,100	£50,400	£29,600	£33,300	£30,700	£35,400
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£29,600	£39,500	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£27,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Forensics & investigations



Northern Ireland

Scotland

South East

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£75,390	£109,725	£83,580	£173,670	£95,025	£156,135
Senior Manager	£54,100	£66,000	£46,300	£71,800	£71,800	£95,700
Manager	£42,100	£51,000	£43,200	£60,800	£58,200	£66,000
Assistant Manager	£36,400	£39,500	£33,300	£44,200	£47,300	£55,100
Senior (newly qualified)	£28,600	£37,400	£29,600	£38,500	£40,600	£49,400
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£26,500	£33,300	£24,800	£29,600	£29,600	£40,600
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£31,200	£24,800	£29,600

South West

Wales

West Midlands

Yorkshire & Humberside

Role	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max	Min	Max
Director/Partner	£92,820	£150,675	£98,280	£109,725	£75,390	£144,690	£92,820	£138,705
Senior Manager	£66,000	£88,400	£60,800	£68,100	£49,400	£66,000	£66,000	£88,400
Manager	£55,100	£71,800	£42,100	£55,100	£44,200	£55,100	£49,400	£66,000
Assistant Manager	£42,100	£55,100	£33,300	£46,300	£33,300	£49,400	£33,300	£49,400
Senior (newly qualified)	£40,600	£49,400	£27,600	£35,400	£28,600	£35,400	£27,600	£33,300
PQ (ACA, ACCA, CA)	£29,600	£37,400	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£28,600	£24,800	£25,500
1st Year Trainee (ACCA, ACA, CA)	£24,800	£27,600	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500	£24,800	£25,500

Forensics & investigations insight



Natalie Harden

Forensics & Investigations Expert, Reed

//

In today's interconnected financial landscape, forensic accounting plays a critical role in uncovering fraud, ensuring transparency, and maintaining trust. But, the sector faces a dual challenge: a growing need for expertise amid a shrinking talent pool.

With the rise of cyber crime, the complexities of cross-border transactions, and heightened scrutiny on environmental and financial misconduct, forensic accountants are essential in safeguarding financial integrity. Yet, accounting firms are struggling to meet demand, prompting a re-evaluation of recruitment, retention, and operational strategies.

AI is also reshaping the forensic accounting landscape, offering unprecedented opportunities to enhance efficiency and accuracy. AI-driven tools can process vast datasets in minutes, identify patterns and anomalies, and continuously monitor transactions in real time. These capabilities allow forensic accountants to focus on strategic analysis rather than repetitive tasks, accelerating investigations and improving outcomes.

However, the integration of AI also presents significant challenges. AI lacks the professional scepticism, judgement, and contextual understanding that human forensic accountants bring to the table.

Ultimately, AI will not replace forensic accountants but will redefine their roles. The human element remains irreplaceable, particularly in interpreting findings, conducting interviews, and providing credible testimony. Forensic accountants combine technical expertise with experience and intuition, ensuring that investigations are thorough, nuanced, and grounded in reality. In an era of rapid change, their role is more vital than ever.

To attract and retain forensic accountants in 2026, businesses must go beyond competitive compensation. Offering clear career progression, robust training programmes, and opportunities to work on high-profile, impactful cases can make roles more appealing. Flexible working arrangements, investment in cutting-edge tools, and fostering a culture of innovation and collaboration are also key. //

Looking for fast, efficient employee screening?

With **over 65 years** of experience in recruitment and screening, you can count on us.



24/7, fast, safe and efficient

We're the only team of UK-based professionals that deliver pre-employment and employee screening services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This allows us to provide you with a fast, efficient service you can rely on, and our dedicated team is only an email or phone call away.



Cutting-edge tech & experience

Our experience combined with access to the latest cutting-edge vetting technology and integrated client portal enables us to offer top-level security, optimum efficiency, transparency, and a seamless experience for you and those you are looking to hire.



Safe hiring pioneers

We collaborate closely with the UK government to drive change. As pioneers of safe hiring practices in the UK, we work to ensure screening processes are non-discriminatory and inclusive, efficient, and best for business and the economy.

Buy online or find out more at:

[Reed.com/screening](https://reed.com/screening)





If you are looking to recruit a highly-skilled professional for your business, or you are looking to take the next step in your career, visit [Reed.com](https://www.reed.com) for further information.

We specialise in recruiting for the following sectors:

[Accountancy & finance](#) | [Business support & administration](#)
[Community care](#) | [Education](#) | [Engineering & manufacturing](#)
[Further education](#) | [Health & care](#) | [Hospitality & facilities services](#)
[Human resources](#) | [Insurance & financial services](#) | [Legal](#)
[Marketing, creative & PR](#) | [NHS](#) | [Police, defence, aerospace & cyber crime](#)
[Procurement & supply chain](#) | [Property & construction](#)
[Qualified social workers](#) | [Sales](#) | [Scientific, food & FMCG](#) | [Technology](#)

