

SACCOMANN ✕

## Legal Salary Survey 2021/22

Get in touch...

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	Yorkshire	North West	Midlands	North East
Level of Qualification	Low – High	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High
Newly Qualified Solicitor	£45,000 - £50,000	£45,000 - £50,000	£40,000 - £48,000	£38,000 - £42,000
Solicitor - 1 year PQE	£47,000 - £52,000	£47,000 - £52,000	£42,000 - £53,000	£40,000 - £48,000
Solicitor - 2 years PQE	£48,000 - £55,000	£48,000 - £55,000	£43,000 - £55,000	£42,000 - £52,000
Solicitor - 3 years PQE	£49,000 - £58,000	£49,000 - £58,000	£45,000 - £56,000	£43,000 - £55,000
Solicitor - 4 years PQE	£52,000 - £60,000	£52,000 - £60,000	£47,000 - £57,000	£46,000 - £56,000
Solicitor - 5 year PQE	£54,000 - £64,000	£54,000 - £64,000	£49,000 - £60,000	£47,000 - £60,000
Solicitor - 6 year PQE	£55,000 - £68,000	£55,000 - £68,000	£50,000 - £65,000	£50,000 - £60,000
Senior / Managing Associate	£60,000 - £95,000	£60,000 - £95,000	£60,000 - £80,000	£50,000 - £78,000
Legal Director	£80,000 - £110,000	£80,000 - £110,000	£80,000 - £110,000	£60,000 - £90,000
Salaried Partner	£110,000 - £185,000	£110,000 - £185,000	£100,000 - £185,000	£70,000 - £150,000+

	Yorkshire	North West	Midlands	North East
Level of Qualification	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High
Newly Qualified Solicitor	£38,000 - £45,500	£38,000 - £45,500	£30,000 - £39,000	£32,000 - £39,000
Solicitor - 1 year PQE	£40,000 - £47,000	£40,000 - £47,000	£33,000 - £41,000	£33,000 - £40,000
Solicitor - 2 years PQE	£42,000 - £49,000	£42,000 - £49,000	£32,000 - £49,000	£34,000 - £42,000
Solicitor - 3 years PQE	£44,000 - £55,000	£44,000 - £55,000	£36,000 - £45,000	£36,000 - £45,000
Solicitor - 4 years PQE	£45,000 - £57,000	£45,000 - £57,000	£38,000 - £48,000	£38,000 - £48,000
Solicitor - 5 year PQE	£46,000 - £62,000	£40,000 - £62,000	£39,000 - £52,000	£39,000 - £52,000
Solicitor - 6 year PQE	£47,000 - £65,000	£47,000 - £65,000	£40,000 - £65,000	£40,000 - £65,000
Senior / Managing Associate	£50,000 - £80,000	£50,000 - £80,000	£45,000 - £80,000	£45,000 - £70,000
Legal Director	£65,000 - £100,000	£65,000 - £100,000	£65,000 - £95,000	£55,000 - £80,000
Salaried Partner	£70,000 - £180,000	£70,000 - £180,000	£65,000 - £150,000	£65,000+

	Yorkshire	North West	Midlands	North East
Level of Qualification	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High
Newly Qualified Solicitor	£24,000 - £33,000	£24,000 - £33,000	£24,000 - £33,000	£24,000 - £32,000
Solicitor - 1 year PQE	£25,000 - £34,000	£25,000 - £34,000	£25,000 - £34,000	£25,000 - £34,000
Solicitor - 2 years PQE	£26,000 - £37,000	£26,000 - £37,000	£26,000 - £37,000	£26,000 - £30,000
Solicitor - 3 years PQE	£27,000 - £38,000	£27,000 - £38,000	£27,000 - £38,000	£27,000 - £38,000
Solicitor - 4 years PQE	£28,000 - £41,000	£28,000 - £41,000	£28,000 - £41,000	£28,000 - £40,000
Solicitor - 5 year PQE	£29,000 - £43,000	£29,000 - £43,000	£29,000 - £43,000	£28,000 - £43,000
Solicitor - 6 year PQE	£30,000 - £55,000	£30,000 - £55,000	£30,000 - £47,000	£29,000 - £47,000
Senior / Managing Associate	£40,000 - £65,000	£40,000 - £65,000	£35,000 - £65,000	£35,000 - £50,000
Legal Director	£45,000 - £80,000	£45,000 - £80,000	£40,000 - £70,000	£40,000 - £60,000
Salaried Partner	£65,000 - £110,000	£65,000 - £110,000	£65,000 - £90,000	£50,000+

	Trainee Chartered Legal Executive	Qualified Chartered Legal Executive
Area of Law	Low - High Salary	Low - High Salary
Personal Injury	£18,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £46,000
Debt Recovery	£18,000 - £28,000	£28,000 - £40,000
Private Client	£18,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £45,000
Commercial Property	£20,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £45,000
Employment	£20,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £50,000
Family	£18,000 - £30,000	£28,000 - £38,000
Residential Property	£20,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £50,000
Commercial	£21,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £45,000

Chartered Legal Executives (Regions)

	0 - 2 years experience	2 - 3 years experience	3 - 4 years experience	5+ years experience
Area of Law	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High	Low - High
Personal Injury	£16,000 - £22,000	£22,000 - £26,000	£24,000 - £28,000	£28,000 - £40,000
Debt Recovery	£16,000 - £20,000	£20,000 - £24,000	£22,000 - £28,000	£26,000 - £32,000
Private Client	£18,000 - £21,000	£20,000 - £26,000	£25,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £45,000
Commercial Property	£19,000 - £22,000	£22,000 - £25,000	£25,000 - £30,000	£30,000 - £40,000
Employment	£18,000 - £20,000	£20,000 - £25,000	£25,000 - £28,000	£28,000 - £40,000
Family	£18,000 - £20,000	£20,000 - £22,000	£22,000 - £28,000	£28,000 - £35,000
Residential Property	£18,000 - £22,000	£22,000 - £28,000	£28,000 - £32,000	£32,000 - £46,000
Commercial	£18,000 - £22,000	£20,000 - £24,000	£25,000 - £28,000	£30,000 - £40,000

Paralegals (Regions)

## Industry (Regions)

Level of Qualification	Low - High
Solicitor NQ - 2 years PQE	£38,000 - £55,000
Solicitor 3– 4 years PQE	£48,000 - £68,000
Solicitor 5 - 6 years PQE	£55,000 - £75,000
Solicitor 7+ years PQE	£55,000 - £85,000 (*Potential Higher)
Legal Manager / Number 2	£60,000 - £95,000
Head of Legal	£85,000- £120,000
General Counsel / Company Secretary	£120,000 - £200,000

### Salary Bandings for Industry Lawyers

Salaries bandings for Lawyers in Industry have always been a little more difficult to categorise than those of their counterparts in Private Practice. The obvious reasons for this primarily relate to a couple of basic factors, namely the accompaniment of a package, which in most cases often outshines those offered by law firms, but also the distinct lack of departmental comparisons with peers In-house, due to smaller teams etc.

That said, we had seen the beginnings of pressure on pre-pandemic In-house salaries, both as a result of organic growth within the sector but also tellingly as law firms have recognised a growing migration of lawyers away from practice. Firms had started to react by offering agile working, the promise of greater work life balance along with higher salaries. As such we saw a number of lawyers remain in Practice, or be bought back as they went to leave, the balance was starting to be redressed in most respects.

The pandemic initially resulted in chronic under recruitment across the board, with many proposed projects being shelved as business clicked into survival mode. However, as confidence in the economy began to bounce back there was an overwhelming desire from huge pockets of commerce to make up for lost time and get on with pre-COVID plans, resulting in a surge of requirements, combined with genuine growth in some sectors. What has been of equal significance is the variation of skills sought after, meaning that we have not just seen upward pressure on the more generalist non-contentious commercial staple, but also property, IP, employment, construction and even litigation.

Salaries in Private Practice will always prove to be the pacesetter which influence remuneration in Industry, however seeing the insatiable appetite for the aforementioned skills across the board means the knock-on effects are inevitable.

## Other Considerations!

### What impacts on salary branding?

As you will see from the salary figures, the bandings are quite wide and there are a number of factors that impact on where any individual lawyer would and could fall within the banding.

#### Area of Practice

Most firms we deal with pay higher salaries in some areas of practice. There isn't great consistency in terms of which areas of law attracted greater salaries however it is the case that generally more commercial disciplines commanded higher salaries.

It is also the case that market forces impact on the level of salary, those where there is a shortage of quality candidates are prone to pay more and to, where available, pay higher bonuses.

Areas under particular pressure at the moment include:

- Commercial Property
- Corporate
- Niche areas e.g. Tax, Pensions

#### Individual Skills & Capabilities

Irrespective of demand or sector it is possible for the individual to impact on their earnings, we consistently see exceptional candidates being rewarded beyond what could be expected within the market. In our experience they do so for a range of reasons, the most frequent/important being : Input in wider projects

- Sector specialism
- Management input
- Business Development
- Client management
- Fee Earning
- Potential

Most often it is a combination of the above.

We also see people who simply work and perform beyond their 'PQE' being effectively treated, for financial and other reasons, as someone of more seniority.

## Benefits:

### Bonuses

There is a fairly even split between those who offer a bonus and those who don't, what is clear though is that they are increasingly of importance to individuals.

The vast majority of bonuses are non-contractual, and these can be linked to salary or company performance.

*Commercial Firms:* With teams and firms being busy benefits are really under scrutiny. However, they still really divide opinion between firms. Some firms offer clear contractual bonuses, some of which are purely financially driven, others include a review of wider activities such as assisting with internal projects, delivering excellently to clients, winning new clients etc. Individuals clearly prefer bonuses that they can more readily identify and consequently are less enthusiastic about those that rely upon the firm or department achieving specified targets but would rather them be driven by their own performance. Equally some firms are concerned that wholly individual bonuses may encourage behaviours that aren't necessarily team spirited if this is the case. It can also be the case that some firms have additional bonuses at more senior levels, for example Associate and Legal Director level.

*General Practices:* Again, there is a mixed story, however it tends to be that the more volume driven areas of work attract bonuses more frequently within general practices.

Approximately 50% of our clients offer bonuses.

**Welcome payments** - 'Golden hello's' and relocation allowances are more prevalent now within high demand areas in commercial firms, these are often used as a way of enticing people on board, or to help them bridge the gap between London or overseas salaries and those in the regions.

**Private Medical Insurance:** There are various very differing positions on this, whilst the vast majority of national and regional commercial firms will offer health insurance to their lawyers and an increasing number of mid-tier firms are offering this, many smaller firms still don't. Those that do offer it usually offer to cover other family members for an additional but competitive cost, a few already include this.

**Pensions:** Since the introduction of auto enrolment minimum contributions have increased and are a minimum of 8% in total including 5% from the employee. Some firms offer a further enhancement on statutory minimums, but these vary greatly:

- *Commercial Firms*—usually between 4-5% - however we have encountered one firm that pays 13%!
- *General Practices* —there is greater variance here but we are finding an increasing number paying up to 5%
- Employers usually require their contributions to be matched where they offer an enhanced contribution.

**Death in Service Benefits:** Death in Service Benefits vary greatly; many firms do offer it but the amount of benefit on offer varies significantly and again very often smaller practices don't offer this benefit. The minimum amount was 1 x salary and the highest level of benefit was 7 x salary. In some cases, this can be enhanced via flexible benefits packages, in some it was linked to membership of the Pension Scheme.

## **Critical Illness Cover and Income Protection:**

- This is a benefit far more likely to be available to Partners /Directors than to all staff.
- There is no evidence of any firm offering this benefit on an all staff basis. These benefits are also often part of a flexible benefits package.

**Parking:** As you would probably expect, this is a benefit that is generally only available to fee-earning and senior staff, particularly for City Centre roles. However, increasingly firms offering a salary sacrifice scheme to assist staff with parking costs, or indeed arrange discounted parking.

**Flexible Benefits:** Firms are looking at flexible benefits far more closely. With the emphasis that many lawyers are putting on work—life balance flexible benefits packages are becoming more common. Generally these give employees the ability to choose to ‘buy’ additional holidays, or elect to put their benefits fund into enhanced pensions, parking, pay for additional family health care or other benefits. The most common flexible benefit is the opportunity to buy or sell holiday. Normally this would be a maximum of one week and if buying the cost would be spread across the year via deductions from salary.

**Working from home:** As IT systems become more sophisticated there is definitely a trend towards this becoming more common place, and in fact many firms have factored this into their new office moves in recent years, specifically creating ‘hot desking’ environments and actually encouraging people to work more flexibly. We have even seen some firms introducing permanent working from home hours in some areas of the business. On the other hand, the majority of firms seem to be managing employees working from home on an adhoc and team by team basis. There also seems to be a change in attitude towards this from some firms, as some seem to be less supportive of Junior Lawyers working from home. It is also highly unusual for any administrative staff to do so.

**Maternity Benefits: Enhanced** maternity benefits have been available within the larger National firms and we are now seeing an increasing number of regional, mid-tier commercial and larger general practices offering enhanced payments. Enhanced maternity benefits are usually linked to a minimum length of service with some form of repayment scheme in the event that a specified time period is not completed following a return from maternity leave. These usually range from anywhere between 3 to 12 months. Sums offered vary, with the first 12-15 weeks being paid at full normal salary and the remaining weeks of pregnancy being paid at a lower percentage. At some firms there is also the potential for longer serving members of staff to receive a ‘return to work bonus’, payable 3 months after the employee has returned to work. Paid time off for ante natal appointments for men is also becoming more widely available.

*Pre-Maternity Leave:* we have seen one higher tier firm in particular offering up to 5 days full pay for time off for IVF treatment, while others are allowing time off for pre-natal appointments

*Enhanced Adoption Pay:* many larger firms offer this, most mirroring enhanced maternity leave

**Paternity Benefits:** We have seen it becoming increasingly common for firms to offer enhanced benefits for employees with a minimum length of service (we have seen this range from 26 weeks to 52 weeks). This is usually in the form of full normal salary for the first week of Paternity leave and statutory Paternity Pay in the second week. Aside from this, in some higher tier firms we have seen employers offering enhanced benefits of up to 4 weeks full pay to fathers. With regards to shared parental leave, this is a Statutory benefit that is being used more frequently.

**Flexible Working:** Formal flexible working is now very common within the legal sector, particularly within larger firms. Some firms have what they term 'core hours', e.g. 10.00am to 4.00pm, particularly in transactional teams - offering employees greater flexibility when they are not so busy. Within another client 30% of their fee earners work flexibly, this isn't just working from home occasionally but usually involved reduced days or hours. It is also becoming more common for firms to allow staff to apply for condensed hours or part time hours, however this is usually linked to a minimum length of service. What is noticeable is that flexible working is no longer just the domain of the working parents, people are genuinely able to choose to do so for lifestyle reasons. Flexible working is becoming so common that some teams are having to push back on it as they struggle to deliver to the clients and provide adequate supervision within the teams. This seems to be a hot topic across HR departments at the moment, and while some firms haven't yet introduced it, some are beginning to look at allowing it on an ad hoc basis.

## **Holiday Entitlement:**

The average number of holidays is:

- 30 days for Partners/Directors
- 25 days for Solicitors and support staff

The vast majority of firms offer additional holiday for long service

**Salary Reviews:** As you would expect, the vast majority of firms are awarding annual salary increases again but with there being quite significant differences in the size of the review, largely related to the factors mentioned earlier in this document.

## **Other Financial Benefits:**

- Income Protection Insurance
- Voluntary Critical Illness Cover
- Introduction Rewards
- Enhanced Sick Pay Scheme
- Hospital Funds
- 'Health & Well being' – again larger firms try and do more around this: fresh fruit, access to financial advice, psychological support, stop smoking clinics etc.
- Discounted Legal Advice

It is becoming more commonplace for emphasis to be placed on the wellbeing of employees as well as the more traditional financial rewards.

This can include things such as:

- Gym Allowance/ Gym on Site, Ride to Work Salary Sacrifice Schemes or app subscriptions e.g. Grokker
- Season Ticket Loans / Parking / Travel Child Care Vouchers
- Sabbatical Leave (unpaid/paid)

- Corporate Social Responsibility Days
- Flu Vaccination Health Screening
- Occupational Health
- Access to Perkbox or similar
- Subsidised Restaurants
- Well Being Programmes, Confidential Counsellor Sessions & Mindfulness Lectures / Classes
- Some larger firms offer discounted shopping schemes with major high street stores
- Easter Eggs, Advent calendars, Birthday cards / gifts / deduction of hours or the day off on your Birthday

## Our Manchester Office:

Email: [manchester@sacomann.com](mailto:manchester@sacomann.com)

Telephone Number: 0161 831 6890

Manchester has a thriving and dynamic legal community that has long been accepted as the strongest regional city from a law perspective (and many would argue from every perspective). Our Manchester office has a depth of expertise that reflects this and clearly has one of the leading legal recruitment offerings in the region. We are currently working on roles in the following locations:

North West

West Midlands

Manchester

Vantage Point, Hardman Street  
Spinningfields  
Manchester  
M3 3HF

## Our Leeds Office:

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Telephone Number: 0113 245 3338

Our office in Leeds, with its reach spanning across Yorkshire, Newcastle and the North East, as well as the East Midlands, is a fundamental part of Sacco Mann. Since our establishment in 1997 we have become a trusted partner to all types of legal practice in these parts of the country. The long-term nature of these relationships ensures we have unparalleled access to the key decision makers and can provide our candidates with a depth of knowledge and context that ensures they can make the right career choices. We are currently working on roles in the following locations:

North East

Yorkshire

East Midlands

1 Broad Gate  
The Headrow  
Leeds  
LS1 8EQ

*All salary information included in our Salary Survey reflects basic salary information only; guaranteed bonuses, car allowances and other benefits which could be deemed to have a financial value have not been included in the data provided.*