

**investigo**



**Banking & Financial Services**  
**Salary Guide 2026**

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## Banking & Financial Services



**Glenn Barton**  
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London continues to stand at the centre of the global banking and financial services market, shaping talent, innovation, and investment trends. Against this backdrop, 2025 was a more measured year for the sector, as organisations navigated ongoing economic and geopolitical uncertainty. Following a subdued 2024, the rebound many had anticipated did not fully materialise, with firms adopting a more disciplined and selective approach to hiring as they assessed how conditions would evolve. This was reflected in increased scrutiny on permanent hiring decisions, while caution in the contract market led to continued pressure on day rates.

At the same time, the continued emergence of AI and automation is reshaping the operating model of financial services firms. Expectations have shifted decisively towards delivering more with less, placing greater emphasis on productivity, efficiency, and measurable impact. Demand is increasingly focused on talent that combines technical expertise with clear commercial value.

Despite these market pressures, we saw a consistent and encouraging performance. While hiring was more selective, demand for specialist talent remained strong, with clients continuing to rely on trusted partners to deliver high-priority, hard-to-fill roles. As organisations moved away from traditional recruitment models, those offering proven, flexible solutions increasingly emerged as partners of choice.

This drove growth in hiring activity across our client base within corporate functions, technology, and change resulting in solid year-on-year performance and a strong recovery from

the slower pace experienced in 2024—reinforcing the value of close partnerships and multi-channel talent solutions.

Location strategy has become an increasingly important consideration for clients. Ongoing cost pressures, combined with the need for scalable delivery models, have accelerated the shift towards nearshore solutions. Romania has emerged as a particularly attractive destination, driven by the strength of its talent pool and evolving conditions for B2B contractors in Poland, prompting organisations to reassess their nearshore approach.

Clients are increasingly leveraging nearshore hubs to balance cost, capability, and proximity to core European operations, making integrated onshore, offshore, and nearshore solutions a clear differentiator. Our partnership with Definia and the hubs they are developing has enabled clients to access deep specialist talent while building more resilient and future-ready operating models.

Looking ahead to 2026, we expect these trends to continue. AI will remain a central driver of change, while cost discipline will keep hiring firmly under scrutiny. Clients require a clear business case for every hire, with expectations higher than ever. In this environment, having a trusted, multi-solution talent partner with access to deep, specialist talent pools will be critical – particularly in securing the high-impact, hard-to-find talent needed to deliver on strategic priorities.

This guide reflects these dynamics, providing insight into salary benchmarks, hiring trends, and the skills most in demand across the London market.



## Software Engineering

Demand for permanent and contract hires remained steady across financial services technology in 2025, though contract volumes were lower than expected due to ongoing macro-economic uncertainty and the impact of major political events on budgets and hiring confidence.

Contractors were primarily engaged for critical delivery rather than experimentation, with demand concentrated on revenue-generating, regulatory-driven and trading-critical work. Buyer-market conditions, combined with a slightly larger available talent pool, allowed clients to be extremely selective, particularly in front-office environments where standards were already high.

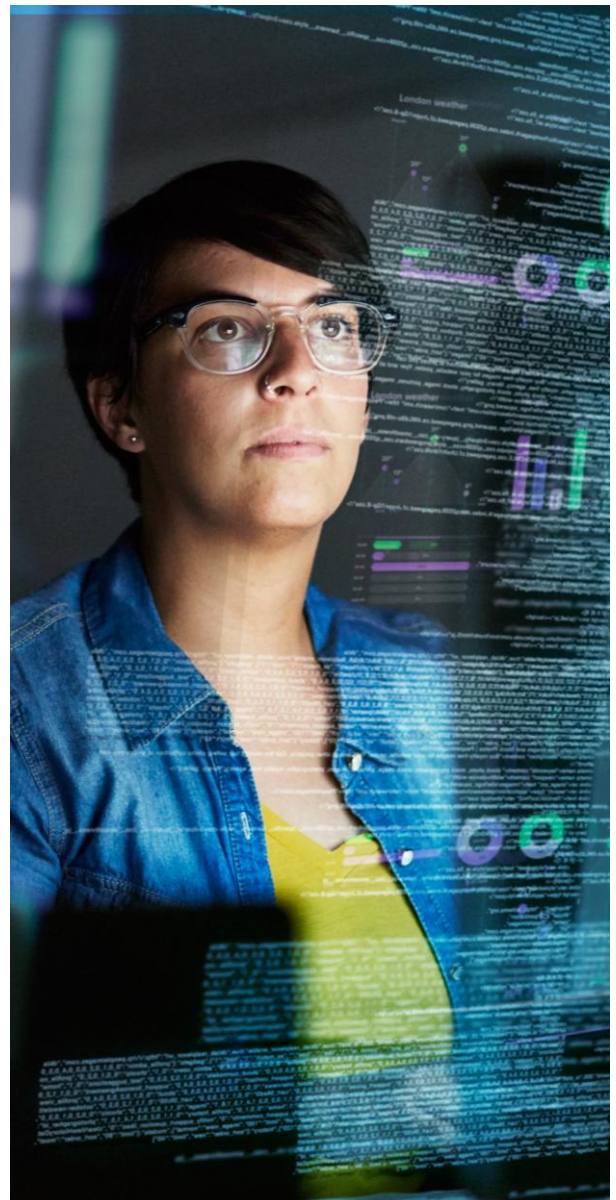
Clients increasingly demanded a total package from contractors, often expecting close alignment with 100% of the job specification. Those able to demonstrate value beyond the core requirements – through deep domain expertise, strong product knowledge or the effective use of AI – were consistently better positioned.

Electronic trading remained a key area of demand, particularly within FX, reinforcing London's position as a global trading hub. This drove sustained need for senior Java engineers with experience in low-latency trading, pricing and execution platforms. Commodities trading also remained strong, with market volatility driving profitability and continued investment in revenue-generating systems.

AI was not a significant hiring requirement for most of 2025. From Q4 2025 into Q1 2026, however, banks rapidly shifted focus toward using AI tools, particularly Claude, to improve productivity and enable development teams to do more with less.

London continues to anchor high-complexity roles, but clients are increasingly adopting multi-location strategies to maximise value, with near-shore locations such as Romania emerging as key delivery centres. Alongside this, clients have moved away from purely contingent recruitment toward SoW, consulting-led and capability-as-a-service models, expecting more strategic delivery support from partners.

Our partnership with Defina, and the service-management capability it provides, has positioned us strongly to support these outcome-driven, blended delivery models.



## Software Engineering

### Perm salaries

	Associate	AVP	VP
<b>C#.net</b>	£55,000	£90,000	£110,000
<b>C++</b>	-	£85,000	£110,000
<b>Java</b>	£55,000	£85,000	£120,000
<b>Specialist i.e. Murex</b>	£125,000	£140,000	£160,000
<b>Java Fullstack</b>	£55,000	£75,000	£95,000
<b>Python</b>	£75,000	£85,000	£160,000
<b>AI/ML Engineer</b>	£110,000	£140,000	£160,000
<b>JavaScript</b>	£55,000	£85,000	£120,000
<b>JavaScript – Front Office Systems</b>	£65,000	£90,000	£140,000
<b>Development Manager – Middle Office</b>	-	-	£120,000
<b>Development Manager – Front Office</b>	-	-	£160,000



# Software Engineering

## Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
<b>C#.net</b>	£650	£750	£900
<b>C++</b>	£700	£825	£950
<b>Java</b>	£750	£850	£950
<b>Java – Low latency</b>	£900	£1000	£1200
<b>Specialist i.e. Murex</b>	£800	£900	£950
<b>Java Fullstack</b>	£650	£750	£850
<b>Python</b>	£650	£750	£950
<b>AI/ML Engineer</b>	£800	£950	£1150
<b>JavaScript</b>	£700	£750	£800
<b>JavaScript – Front Office Systems</b>	£750	£825	£900
<b>Development Manager – Middle Office</b>	£850	£950	£1200
<b>Development Manager – Front Office</b>	£950	£1050	£1500



## Quant & Trading Technology

London's quant and trading technology market in 2025 remained highly dynamic, with particularly strong demand in rates and curve-building. Ongoing economic volatility and persistent inflation have pushed firms to prioritise robust curve construction across both linear and exotic products, making experienced rates quants with strong engineering skills especially scarce and valuable.

Competition for this talent has intensified beyond traditional investment banks. Hedge funds are increasingly targeting candidates who would historically have taken front-office bank roles, driving up demand and compensation. While hedge funds often offer higher bonus potential, flatter structures, and less bureaucracy, banks still appeal through clearer career progression, defined responsibilities, and more predictable work-life balance. As a result, candidates are weighing a broader set of factors than just pay.

On the technology side, despite recurring claims of its decline, C++ remains firmly entrenched in London's quant ecosystem. Many new risk and quant library builds continue to adopt it for performance-critical systems. Java holds ground in areas like eFX and middleware, while Python dominates research, back-testing, and analytics. Increasingly, the most in-demand profiles combine strong C++ production skills with Python for experimentation.

AI and machine learning adoption is accelerating across pricing, risk, and scenario analysis. Although many firms remain cautious about disclosing front-office AI strategies, there is clear momentum, with more experimental and research-driven roles gaining funding. Demand is rising for practical experience with large language models and advanced ML, even if widespread production use is still developing.

Hiring processes have become more rigorous due to tighter budgets and additional approvals, with a strong emphasis on candidates who can deliver immediate impact—especially at senior levels. This has reinforced the trend toward hiring “exact matches.” Contract roles are increasingly used as a flexible alternative to permanent hiring, often with the option to convert later. While offshoring and nearshoring are expanding to manage costs, highly specialised quant roles have largely remained insulated.

Looking ahead to 2026, the market is expected to stay tight for rates and curve-building talent. Hedge funds will continue to compete aggressively with banks, sustaining pressure on compensation. AI and ML will become more embedded across workflows, Python will remain dominant for research, and C++ will continue to underpin core trading systems and quantitative libraries. Firms that can balance competitive pay with stability will be best positioned to attract top talent.



## Quant

### Perm salaries

	Highly skilled	Expert
Quant Analyst – Middle Office	£120,000	£160,000
Quant Analyst – Front Office	£120,000	£160,000
Quant Developer – Middle Office	£120,000	£170,000
Quant Developer – Front Office	£140,000	£220,000

### Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
Quant Analyst – Middle Office	£850	£975	£1,100
Quant Analyst – Front Office	£950	£1050	£1,250
Quant Developer – Middle Office	£850	£975	£1,150
Quant Developer – Front Office	£950	£1,000	£1,250



## Sell-side change

The sell-side change landscape across 2024 and into 2025 has been characterised by caution, recalibration, and selective mobilisation. While regulatory pressure has remained a constant, the pace and tone of investment have been heavily influenced by macro volatility, political developments, and structural cost pressures, particularly across the United Kingdom and the United States.

2024 was a year of restraint and reprioritisation. After heavy post-pandemic hiring, banks tightened budgets, reduced headcount, and slowed programme delivery. The delay of Basel 3.1 to 2026 eased immediate regulatory pressure, allowing firms to focus on cost control. Technology investment was largely defensive – system upgrades, infrastructure stability, selective cloud migration, and early AI use cases. Large-scale transformation programmes were limited, but risk change remained a priority, particularly in counterparty credit risk, market risk, and FRTB.

2025 was defined by volatility and cost pressure. Political and fiscal uncertainty in the UK and US impacted investment confidence, while rising employment costs (including UK National Insurance changes) forced banks to reassess hiring and resourcing strategies.

Firms prioritised regulatory and risk initiatives, tightened governance, and scrutinised ROI more closely. Despite this, signs of recovery emerged: Basel mobilisation began to pick up, DORA drove demand in operational resilience, and regulatory programmes increasingly supported broader data and infrastructure modernisation. Growth discussions returned, but with a disciplined lens.

The most consistent driver of hiring has been integration rather than new growth. M&A activity, bank failures, and consolidations created sustained demand across PMO, platform consolidation, data harmonisation, and risk/control alignment. This has underpinned the market while discretionary hiring slowed.

Cost pressures accelerated the move toward offshore and nearshore delivery models. London remains a hub for senior transformation leadership, but execution is increasingly distributed across lower-cost locations.

Sentiment is improving, with expectations of measured growth:

- Basel 3.1 implementation will drive increased hiring and programme scale
- Regulatory change will act as a catalyst for modernisation and efficiency
- Investment in growth, digital platforms, and AI is likely to return cautiously
- Flexible, globally distributed workforce models will continue to expand

The market is transitioning from caution (2024) and volatility (2025) into a more stable, disciplined growth phase in 2026—driven by regulatory clarity, integration maturity, and targeted investment.



# Sell-side change

## Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
<b>Business Analyst – Associate</b>	£500	£540	£575
<b>Business Analyst – Risk SME (VP)</b>	£700	£800	£900
<b>Business Analyst – Reg SME (VP)</b>	£625	£740	£850
<b>IT Business Analyst (AVP)</b>	£550	£625	£700
<b>IT Business Analyst (VP)</b>	£650	£750	£850
<b>Data Business Analyst (AVP)</b>	£550	£600	£650
<b>Data Business Analyst (VP)</b>	£600	£725	£850
<b>Reg &amp; Risk Project Manager (VP)</b>	£650	£775	£900
<b>IT Project Manager (VP)</b>	£650	£750	£850
<b>Regulatory Project Manager (VP)</b>	£650	£775	£900
<b>Front Office Project Manager (VP)</b>	£750	£875	£1,000
<b>Technical Delivery Manager (VP)</b>	£700	£800	£900
<b>Reg &amp; Risk Programme Manager</b>	£850	£975	£1,100
<b>Technology Programme Manager</b>	£850	£1,025	£1,200
<b>Data Programme Manager</b>	£850	£975	£1,100
<b>Front Office Programme Manager</b>	£1,000	£1,200	£1,400
<b>Portfolio Programme Manager</b>	£850	£925	£1,000
<b>Programme Director</b>	£900	£1,050	£1,200
<b>Senior Programme Director</b>	£1,100	£1,300	£1,500
<b>Head of Change</b>	£1,500	£2,000	£2,500
<b>PMO Analyst</b>	£400	£450	£500
<b>PMO Manager</b>	£600	£650	£700
<b>PMO</b>	£650	£725	£800
<b>Head of PMO</b>	£800	£950	£1,100

## Commodities change

In 2025, the commodities trading market experienced a strong shift towards data-led trading, with firms placing greater emphasis on Python, SQL, and real-time analytics capabilities. Demand also increased for Business Analysts and Project Managers embedded directly within trading desks rather than operating solely through IT functions. Risk and commercially aligned roles dominated hiring activity, while organisations increasingly sought cross-commodity expertise across energy, metals, and emissions markets as part of broader cost-efficiency initiatives. Key projects throughout the year focused on ETRM upgrades, risk and P&L reporting enhancements, and regulatory change delivery.

Looking forwards to 2026, demand for experienced commodities professionals is expected to remain strong. In London, highly skilled commodities-focused BA professionals are forecast to command day rates of £850–900, particularly those with expertise across ETRM systems, front-office operations, and risk management. True commodities BA/PM professionals remain in short supply, and firms are willing to pay a premium for individuals capable of operating directly alongside traders. Consultants within the ETRM space are increasingly seeing multiple opportunities reach offer stage simultaneously as competition for specialist talent intensifies.

Emerging demand continues to centre around ESG, emissions, renewables, LNG, and oil markets as firms invest heavily in long-term sustainability strategies and adapt to market volatility. Front-office aligned BA and PM professionals within power, gas, and LNG are expected to remain highly sought after throughout 2026. At the same time, the increasing complexity of the UK power market is driving demand for more specialised skillsets, while organisations are placing greater focus on hybrid technical profiles that can support data and AI-led transformation programmes.

London remains the primary hub for commodities trading businesses due to the concentration of trading desks and front-office stakeholders, although hiring is expected to become more selective than in 2025. Meanwhile, Geneva, Singapore, and Amsterdam continue to attract investment as firms expand physical trading operations internationally, with Geneva focused on physical delivery trading and Singapore strengthening its position in energy, LNG, and power markets.

Overall, firms are expected to remain cautious on headcount growth but continue investing in high-impact change and transformation roles, particularly those aligned to risk, front-office operations, and renewable energy initiatives.



## Commodities change

### Perm salaries

	Associate	AVP	VP	D
Endur Business Analyst	£50,000	£65,000	£95,000	£120,000
ETRM Business Analyst	£45,000	£60,000	£95,000	£120,000
Project Manager	£50,000	£70,000	£100,000	£130,000
Programme Manager	-	£75,000	£110,000	£150,000
PMO Lead	£40,000	£50,000	£70,000	£100,000

### Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
Endur BA	£750	£950	£1200
Endur PM	£800	£1000	£1300
Commodities BA	£650	£800	£950
Commodities PM	£750	£900	£1000
LNG BA/PM	£700	£900	£1100



## Buy-side change

2025 was a transitional year, shaped by higher financing costs and cautious hiring across asset and wealth managers. Demand shifted away from broad “generalist” change profiles toward specialist transformation talent, particularly those combining business change with data, AI and regulatory expertise.

Key in-demand skills included data analytics (Python/SQL), digital transformation, regulatory change, and front-to-back operating model design, alongside strong stakeholder management.

Location strategies remained cost-conscious, with firms maintaining London hubs but increasingly leveraging nearshore/offshore models (India, Southeast Asia) for operational and tech delivery.

Aladdin and Charles River are still trumping the scene as the go-to OMS systems, with thinkFolio a distant memory now. Aladdin seems to be getting the edge over CRD currently, but both are still going strong.

Sentiment was cautiously improving but uneven—early-year hiring was slow, but demand picked up toward year-end as firms focused on efficiency, cost optimisation, and value creation rather than growth.

Looking ahead, 2026 is shaping up as an inflection point, with hiring expected to strengthen as confidence returns.

Alternative Investments are still a point of growth, but then unsurprisingly AI is the big talking point for all companies currently.

Demand is increasingly centred on AI-enabled transformation, data-led decision making, and product innovation, with hybrid skillsets (tech + business change) now critical.

There is also growing demand for sector specialists (e.g. private markets, ESG/climate, alternatives) and transformation leaders who can bridge legacy platforms with modern architectures.

Location strategies will continue to balance onshore leadership with offshore execution, but with a greater emphasis on agility and speed to hire.

Overall sentiment is increasingly positive but highly competitive, with a clear “war for talent” emerging for top-tier transformation professionals.



## Buy-side change

### Perm salaries

	AVP	VP	D
General BA	£75,000	£95,000	£130,000
Specialist BA	£90,000	£125,000	£180,000
TOM Design professional	£75,000	£95,000	£130,000
PM/BA	£80,000	£115,000	£180,000
Business Transformation Manager	£95,000	£110,000	£180,000

### Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
General BA	£700	£750	£950
Specialist BA	£750	£900	£1,000
TOM Design professional	£750	£900	£1,100
PM/BA	-	£1,000	£1,250
Business Transformation Manager	-	£1,200	£1,450



## Procurement

In 2025, sustainability and ESG became firmly embedded within procurement strategies. What was once a reporting exercise is now a commercial priority, with procurement leaders balancing responsible sourcing alongside ongoing cost pressures driven by inflation and global uncertainty.

Alongside this, digital transformation accelerated. AI-driven tools and advanced analytics enhanced spend visibility, streamlined sourcing processes, and supported more informed decision-making. Organisations increasingly recognise that agile, data-led procurement functions are better equipped to drive efficiency and navigate disruption.

These trends were reflected in hiring activity. Demand for permanent roles increased, particularly at senior level, as organisations invested in leaders capable of delivering transformation and reshaping operating models. Interim hiring remained strong, with businesses seeking specialist expertise to support cost-reduction initiatives and transformation programmes.

As we move into 2026, market sentiment is notably more positive.

Leadership hiring is gaining momentum with increased confidence in making long-term, strategic appointments.

Transformation programmes are moving forward, particularly across systems and digital initiatives.

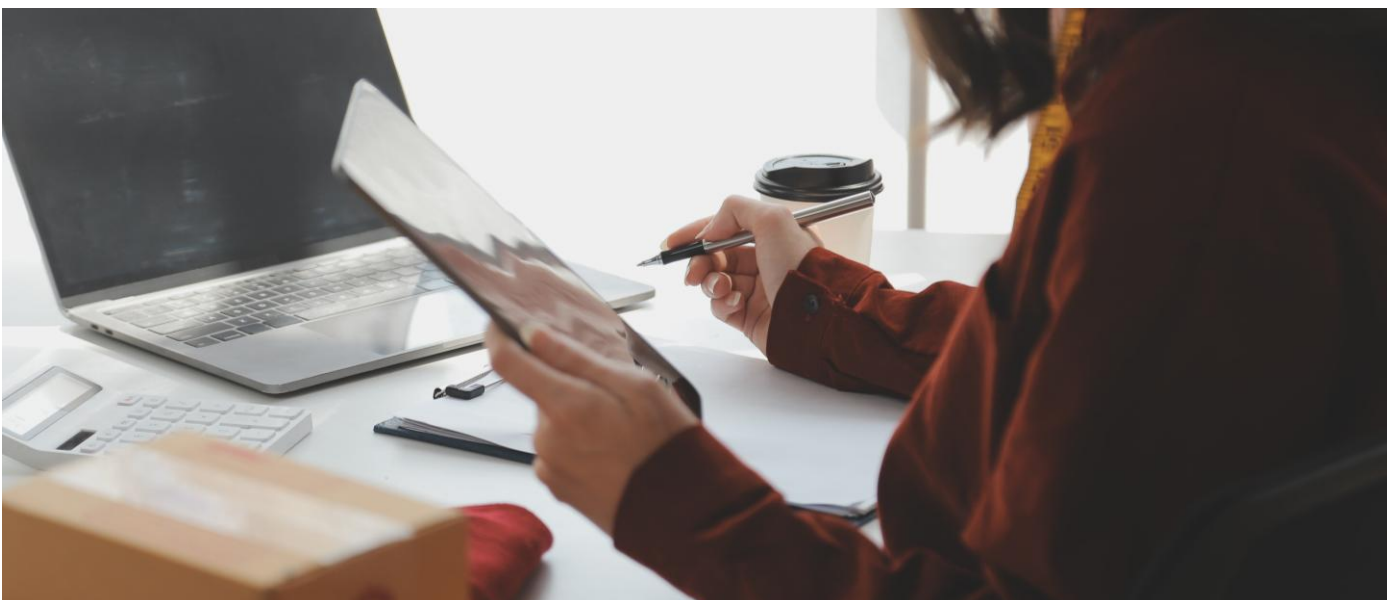
Candidate confidence is improving, leading to a more active and fluid recruitment market.

The interim market remains buoyant with continued demand for specialists delivering immediate impact.

### Key skills in demand?

- Transformation and change leadership
- Data and digital capability
- Strategic supplier relationship management
- Ability to influence at board level

While London remains a key hub, hiring is becoming more geographically diverse. Manchester and the Midlands continue to see increased activity, reflecting broader investment and the growth of regional talent pools.



## Procurement

### Perm salaries

	Associate	AVP	VP	Category Lead	D
<b>IT Procurement</b>	£65,000	£80,000	£100,000	£120,000	£150,000
<b>Non-IT Procurement</b>	£60,000	£75,000	£95,000	£110,000	£150,000
<b>Third Party Risk</b>	£65,000	£80,000	£100,000	£120,000	£140,000
<b>Supplier Manager</b>	£60,000	£75,000	£95,000	£110,000	£140,000

### Contract rates

	Intermediate	Highly skilled	Expert
<b>IT Procurement</b>	£550	£800	£900
<b>Non-IT Procurement</b>	£550	£700	£800
<b>Third Party Risk</b>	£600	£750	£950
<b>Supplier Manager</b>	£550	£650	£850
<b>Analyst</b>	£500	£650	£650



## Risk

The year of 2025 was really a game of two halves. The start of the year hampered by the constant talk of Tariffs which caused uncertainty and meant that the year got off to a slow start. But by May/June time the market had picked up across London, Europe and New York and firms were looking to hire to support those trading desks that were growing and this momentum continued right up to year end.

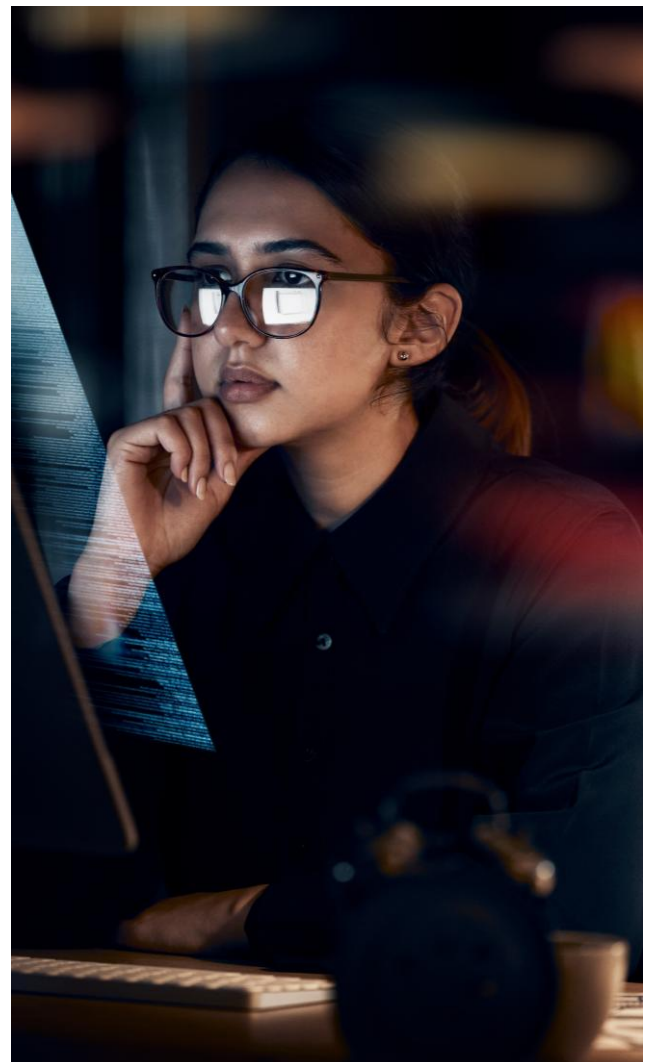
Front office risk / market risk teams in the hedge fund have a key role to play in these uncertain times and therefore, experience in managing traders and portfolio managers is the key attribute clients are looking for, this alongside deep product knowledge. There has been a slowdown in some junior / analyst level hiring with firms making use of AI and automation, however CROs and senior management are conscious of ensuring the next wave of risk managers are coming through.

Equities and commodity desks have been the busiest areas across the hedge fund, commodity trading and making space. Therefore, candidates with this skillset are in high demand. This trend is true across London and New York, and the move the middle east continues to attract talent globally. Towards the back end of 2025, Emerging Markets started to pop up across some of the bigger multi strat hedge funds – and those with extensive EM experience of which there are a few were again in demand.

Looking forward to 2026, as mentioned above the demand for risk managers with deep product knowledge and the ability to challenge/partner with senior front office stakeholders remain the priority for clients. And depending on the strategy, some hedge funds still want any risk manager to be strong coders (python mostly). How long this will remain with the increasing efficiency of AI?

In terms of location, the Middle East remains the key spot for the hedge funds and the like. Whilst in Europe; London, Amsterdam, Paris and Geneva continue to attract the best talent across hedge fund, commodity trading and market makers.

Portfolio Research / Construction teams have been around for years (Citadel) but more and more hedge funds have been creating these teams as a bridge between Risk, Quant and the Front Office. This is to look at topics such as alpha capture, asset allocation and PM performance. This team / area seems to be a core area of focus for those hedge funds looking to grow but also ensure performance is optimised across their business in 2026.



## Risk

### Perm salaries

#### London

	Associate	AVP	VP	D	MD
<b>Market Risk</b>	£40-60k	£65-80k	£80-150k	£160-220k	£220k plus
<b>Market Risk Analytics</b>	£40-60k	£65-80k	£80-150k	£160-220k	£220k plus
<b>Portfolio Construction</b>	£50-70k	£75-90k	£90-160k	£175-250k	£250k plus

#### New York

	Associate	AVP	VP	D	MD
<b>Market Risk</b>	\$50-80k	\$80-100k	\$100-160k	\$160-250k	\$250k plus
<b>Market Risk Analytics</b>	\$50-80k	\$80-100k	\$100-160k	\$160-250k	\$250k plus
<b>Portfolio Construction</b>	\$60-90k	\$90-120k	\$120-175k	\$180-250k	\$250k plus



## Compliance

Compliance hiring in 2025 remained selective but resilient.

Following years of offshoring, many organisations reassessed their operating models. While offshore teams continue to handle basic surveillance tasks, senior roles have increasingly returned to London. Positions focused on advisory, calibration, and decision-making require close interaction with front-office teams, driving this shift.

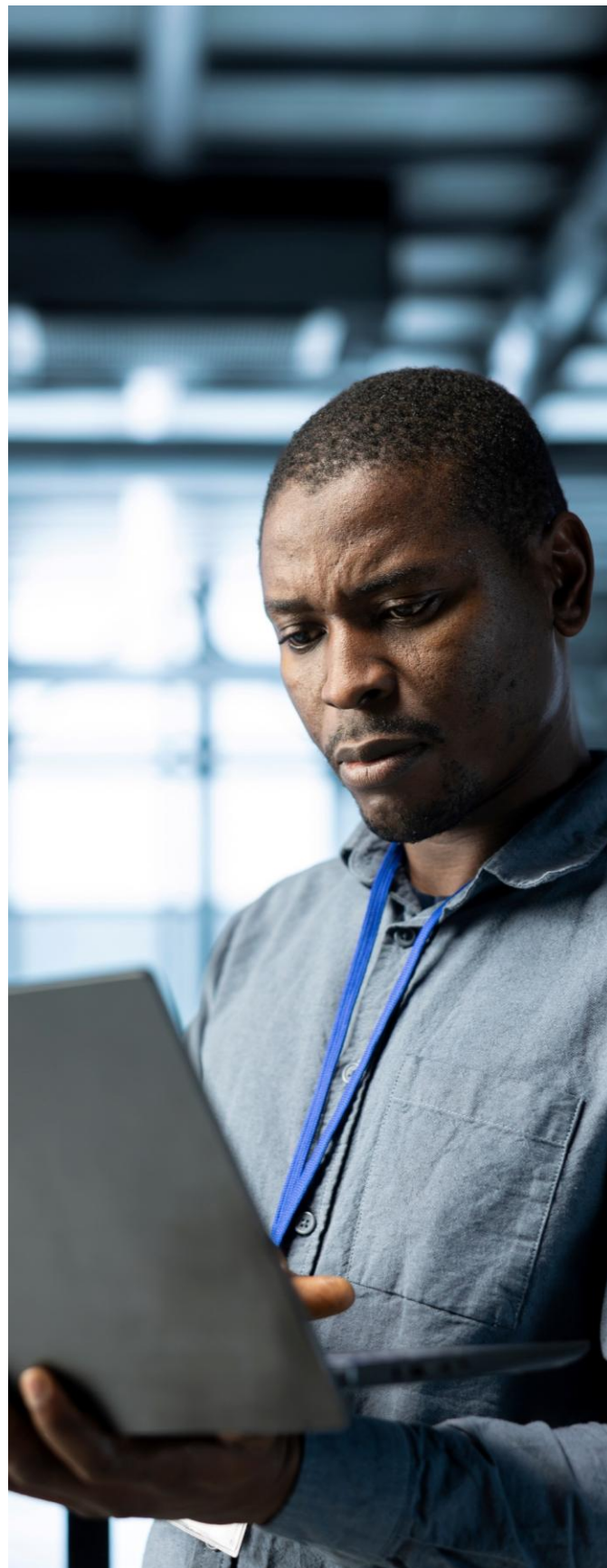
Beyond traditional banking, buy-side firms and commodities businesses continued to build more specialised compliance functions. Demand has grown for experts in market surveillance, conduct, and regulatory reporting—particularly within firms running algorithmic trading strategies, where technical and asset-class expertise is essential. However, a shortage of junior talent remains a key challenge, largely due to previous offshoring trends impacting the London talent pipeline.

The commodities and energy sector has been a standout area of growth. Expansion across hedge funds, asset managers, and trading houses has sustained demand for compliance professionals with multi-jurisdictional expertise, particularly across frameworks such as EMIR, MiFID II, SFTR, and REMIT.

Looking ahead, candidate behaviour is shifting, with more professionals exploring opportunities beyond traditional banking into asset management, fintech, and advisory environments.

Demand continues to be driven by ongoing regulatory expansion rather than one-off change programmes. Compliance is now firmly established as a core, business-critical function.

Technology will also play an increasingly central role. AI and data-led tools are enhancing surveillance and reporting but are introducing new governance challenges. As a result, firms are placing greater emphasis on oversight, data quality, and how decisions are generated—not just the outcomes themselves.



# Compliance

## Perm salaries

	Associate	AVP	VP	D
<b>Compliance generalist</b>	£55,000	£70,000	£100,000	£140,000
<b>Trade surveillance</b>	£45,000	£75,000	£100,000	£130,000
<b>Compliance advisory</b>	£60,000	£85,000	£120,000	£150,000
<b>Compliance monitoring</b>	£45,000	£75,000	£90,000	£130,000
<b>Control Room</b>	£45,000	£70,000	£90,000	£130,000
<b>Head of Compliance and MLRO (smf16&amp;17)</b>	-	-	-	£130,000-£250,000



## Sell-side finance

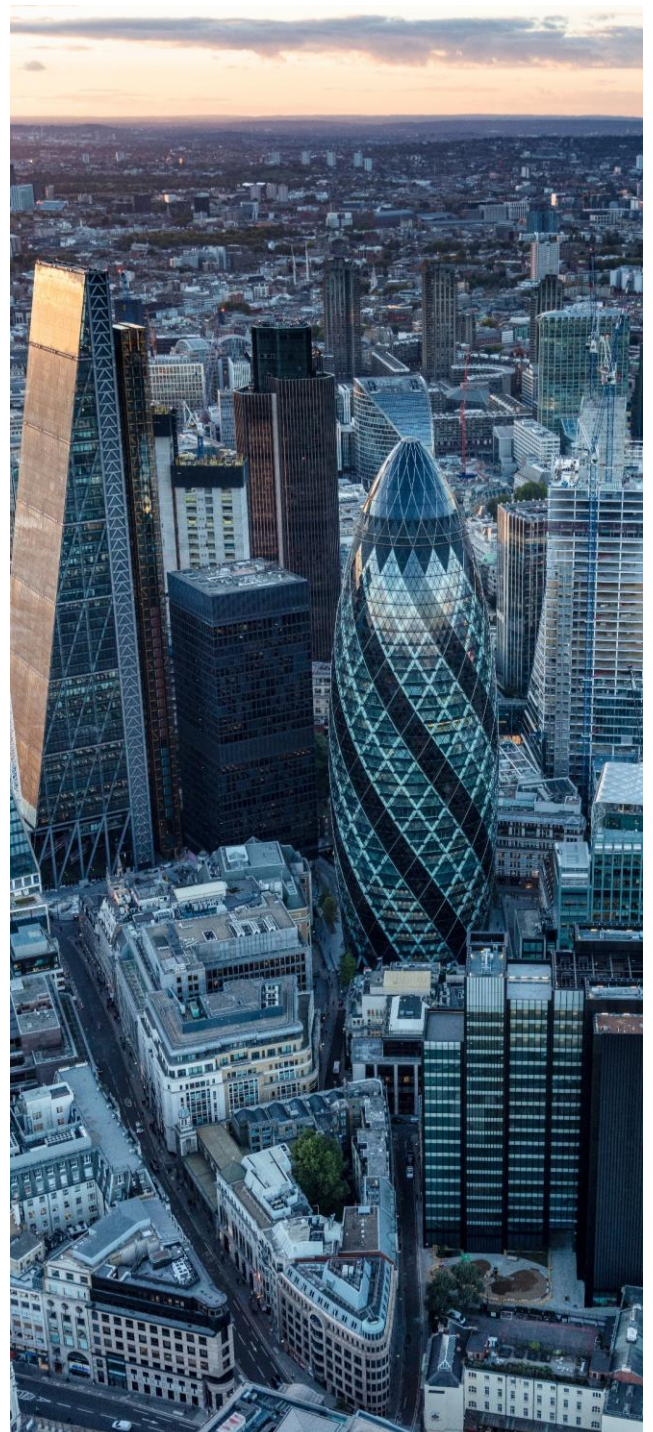
2025 was a year where accounting teams on the sell-side became much more targeted in their hiring. Firms weren't just looking for good all-rounders – they wanted professionals who could step in and deliver immediately. Specialist roles in FP&A, regulatory reporting, controls, and financial reporting were in high demand. The focus shifted to candidates who could navigate complex instruments and evolving regulatory requirements with confidence.

Technology also played a bigger role than ever. Knowledge of automation tools, data analytics, and even coding languages started to separate the top candidates from the rest. Accounting wasn't just about spreadsheets anymore; it was about driving efficiency, uncovering insights, and supporting decision-making. Interim and contract hires became increasingly common as firms turned to specialist professionals for projects such as system upgrades, IFRS transitions, or post-M&A integrations, as well as a founded conservatism to market sentiment.

Looking into 2026, these trends are expected to intensify. Data-driven finance will become the baseline expectation, with firms seeking accountants who can not only report numbers but analyse them and provide actionable insights. Automation and AI will continue to change the way accounting teams operate, making professionals who can leverage these tools highly valuable. Interim and project-based expertise will remain crucial, especially for regulatory implementations, system transformations, or time-sensitive finance projects.

Beyond technical skills, advisory and communication capabilities will increasingly define senior accounting roles, as professionals are expected to act as business partners rather than just number-crunchers. Emerging products and regulations, including crypto accounting, ESG-linked instruments, and complex derivatives, will also shape the hiring landscape, with firms chasing professionals who can confidently navigate these areas.

In short, 2025 highlighted that sell-side accountancy is no longer just about compliance. It's about insight, tech fluency, and adaptability. In 2026, the accountants who combine technical excellence with advisory ability and flexibility will be the ones most in demand.



## Sell-side finance

### Contract rates

#### Corporate Accounting

	Highly skilled	Expert
Accountant	£300	£550+
Finance Manager	£450	£650+
Financial Controller	£500	£650+
Head of Finance	£700	£1,000+
Finance Director	£800	£1,200+

#### FP&A

	Highly skilled	Expert
Analyst/AVP	£350	£450+
Manager/VP	£500	£700+
Head of/Director	£800	£1,000+

#### Regulatory Reporting

	Highly skilled	Expert
Analyst	£400	£600
AVP	£500	£650
Manager/VP	£550	£700
Senior Manager/SVP	£650	£800
Head of/Director	£800	£1,000+

## Buy-side finance

Corporate accounting hiring was very selective through 2024–25, as firms focused on efficiency over expansion. The emphasis was on automation, outsourcing, and getting more from existing teams, streamlining processes while maintaining or reducing headcount.

FP&A saw a slight increase in demand, with focus on cost, budgeting and forecasting picking up, as firms navigated slower performance. Hires were focused on optimising spend and improving efficiencies internally.

Despite a slower deal market through 2024–25, hiring for portfolio monitoring and valuations roles picked up.

With exits delayed and deployment cautious, investment managers shifted focus from growth to protecting and understanding existing assets. Accurate valuations became crucial amid volatile pricing and increased regulator and LP attention.

Longer hold periods meant portfolios needed deeper performance analysis, rather than relying on assumptions driven by transactions.

Firms invested in stronger monitoring and valuation capability to support investor confidence and stay exit-ready when markets improve. Fund control hiring stayed steady through 2024–25, driven less by deal flow and more by oversight and control. As firms increasingly outsourced accounting to third parties, in-house teams focused on adding commercial value by managing risk and ensuring investor confidence.

Looking into 2026, Finance leaders are looking for their teams to shift from transactional to strategic, providing insights that support decision-making and strengthen overall fund performance.



## Buy-side finance

### Perm salaries

#### Fund accounting

	Lower	Higher	Bonus
Accountant	£60,000	£80,000	10% to 30%
Controller	£80,000	£100,000	20% to 40%
Senior Controller	£90,000	£120,000	20% to 40%
Head of	£120,000	£160,000	40% to 60% +
Director	£160,000	£200,000	40% to 60% +

#### Portfolio monitoring & valuations

	Lower	Higher	Bonus
Analyst	£70,000	£80,000	20% to 40%
Associate	£80,000	£100,000	30% to 50%
Senior Associate	£100,000	£130,000	30% to 50%
Manager	£130,000	£170,000	40% to 60%
Director	£170,000	£200,000	40% to 60% +

#### FP&A

	Lower	Higher	Bonus
Analyst / Accountant	£60,000	£90,000	10% to 25%
Manager / VP	£90,000	£120,000	25% to 40%
Head of FP&A	£120,000	£150,000	30% to 50%
Director	£150,000	£180,000	40% to 60% +

#### Corporate accounting

	Lower	Higher	Bonus
Accountant	£60,000	£70,000	10% to 20%
Finance Manager	£70,000	£90,000	10% to 30%
Financial Controller	£90,000	£130,000	20% to 40%
Head of Finance	£130,000	£170,000	20% to 50%
Finance Director	£170,000	£200,000	30% to 60% +

## Buy-side finance

### Contract rates

#### Fund accounting

	Intermediate	Expert
Accountant	£350	£600+
Controller	£500	£650+
Senior Controller	£700	£850+
Head of	£800	£950+
Director	£850	£1,000+

#### FP&A

	Intermediate	Expert
Analyst / Accountant	£350	£550+
Manager / VP	£500	£650+
Head of FP&A	£700	£900+
Director	£800	£1,000+

#### Corporate accounting

	Intermediate	Expert
Accountant	£350	£600+
Finance Manager	£450	£650+
Financial Controller	£600	£750+
Head of Finance	£800	£1,000+
Finance Director	£900	£1,100+

## Meet the team



**Glenn Barton**  
**Head of Financial Services**  
Software  
Engineering



**Dom Jennings**  
**Partner**  
Quant, Risk & Trading  
Technology



**Dami Afolabi**  
**Principal Consultant**  
Sell Side  
Change



**Simon Warburton**  
**Principal Consultant**  
Buy Side  
Change



**Anai Patel**  
**Principal Consultant**  
Commodities  
Change



**Chris Castle**  
**Director**  
Procurement



**Tom Andrews**  
**Senior Consultant**  
Sell & Buy Side  
Finance

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