2026

Market Insights & Salary Guide

TECHNOLOGY & DIGITAL

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OVERVIEW

The UK Technology sector remains one of the most dynamic and resilient areas of the employment market, despite ongoing global economic challenges and national factors such as the General Election and tax reform. Demand for skilled technology professionals continues to outstrip supply, particularly across disciplines such as DevOps, Cloud, Data, and Cybersecurity.

Chroma Recruitment's 2026 Technology Salary Benchmarking Guide has been created using data from the 6 months to December 2025, drawing on internal placement data and external sources including IT Jobs Watch, CWJobs, Indeed, JobServe, and TotalJobs.

This guide is designed to support both clients and candidates in understanding market trends, salary expectations, and the factors that influence pay across various technology roles.

KEY INSIGHTS

- **Salary growth** has stabilised following several years of sharp increases post-pandemic. Most roles have seen a 3–6% rise year-on-year.

- **Hybrid and remote work flexibility** remains a major draw. Companies offering strong flexibility retain a competitive edge.

- **Skills scarcity** persists in DevOps, Cloud, Data, and Cyber roles. Businesses are paying a premium (up to 15%) for candidates with niche expertise in AI, machine learning, or cybersecurity frameworks.

- **Contracting** remains strong, particularly for transformation and infrastructure projects, with day rates increasing by around 8% over 2024.

2025 UK SALARY BANDS - PERMANENT

JOB TITLE	JUNIOR	MID-LEVEL	SENIOR
DevOps Engineer	£28,000 - £35,000	£45,000 - £60,000	£70,000 - £95,000
Infrastructure Engineer	£28,000 - £35,000	£42,000 - £57,000	£60,000 - £75,000
IT Support Engineer	£26,000 - £30,000	£32,000 - £40,000	£45,000 - £55,000
Solutions Architect	N/A	£60,000 - £75,000	£80,000 - £120,000
Software Engineer / Developer	£28,000 - £38,000	£42,000 - £55,000	£60,000 - £85,000
AI / Machine Learning Specialist	£35,000 - £40,000	£50,000 - £65,000	£70,000 - £110,000
Software Tester / QA Engineer	£25,000 - £35,000	£38,000 - £52,000	£55,000 - £75,000
Cloud Engineer	£37,000 - £42,000	£50,000 - £65,000	£70,000 - £95,000
Data Engineer	£35,000 - £45,000	£50,000 - £70,000	£70,000 - £110,000
Cyber Security Analyst / Engineer	£30,000 - £40,000	£50,000 - £70,000	£75,000 - £90,000
Product Manager / UX Designer	£35,000 - £42,000	£45,000 - £60,000	£65,000 - £85,000
Project Manager	£35,000 - £40,000	£45,000 - £60,000	£65,000 - £80,000
Business Analyst	£30,000 - £40,000	£48,000 - £60,000	£65,000 - £80,000

NOTES

Salaries above are indicative averages for permanent UK roles and should not be considered fixed. Market fluctuations, company size, benefits, and specialisation will influence actual offers.

For tailored benchmarking or bespoke data by role, location, or contract type, contact the Technology & Digital team at Chroma Recruitment.

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REGIONAL MODIFIERS

The UK Technology market remains regionally diverse:

- **Manchester / Northwest:** Benchmark region (data baseline).
- **London & South East:** +10%-20% premium on listed bands.
- **Midlands:** Typically 5%-10% lower than the Northwest.
- **Scotland & North East:** Generally 10%-15% lower, depending on demand.
- **South West & Wales:** Around 5%-10% lower than the Northwest.

Remote-first roles tend to pay closer to the national average, while hybrid roles outside London may offer high flexibility in exchange for slighly lower base pay.

2025 CONTRACTOR DAY RATE BENCHMARKS

ROLE	TYPICAL DAY RATE
DevOps Engineer	£450 - £650
Cloud Engineer	£450 - £600
Software Engineer	£400 - £550
Solutions Architect	£600 - £800
Data Engineer	£450 - £650
Cyber Security Specialist	£500 - £750
Project Manager	£400 - £600
Business Analyst	£350 - £550

NOTES

These figures assume OUTSIDE IR35 contracts. Inside IR35 assignments or umbrella arrangements may reduce take-home pay by 20%-25%.

Contract assignments can typically be delivered within 48 hours, subject to role complexity and availability. Engagement models may include statement of works (fixed-price, outcome-based) or daily-rate contracts, depending on business requirements.

Rates are usually all-inclusive and, when fully costed, are typically 10–15% higher than the permanent salary equivalent, reflecting flexibility, speed of delivery, and reduced long-term employment risk.

Data sources include Chroma's internal analytics, IT Jobs Watch, CWJobs, Indeed, Jobserve and TotalJobs

GUIDANCE FOR CANDIDATES

To position yourself competitively in the 2026 market:

- Highlight your certifications, frameworks, and tool proficiency (AWS, Azure, Kubernetes, Python, etc).
- Demonstrate impact and outcomes. Show how your work improved performance, security, or delivery.
- Stay current with emerging areas such as AI integration, DevSecOps and data automation.
- For contract professionals: Maintain your compliance (IR35 status, insurance, business setup) to maximise opportunities.

GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

When assessing salary expectations, remember that total offering matters more than salary alone. Candidates weigh up flexible working, upskilling opportunities, company culture, and project scope. Consider the following to remain competitive:

- Offer hybrid or remote options wherever possible.
- Promote clear career progression and training budgets.
- Showcase your technology stack and project pipeline to attract candidates motivated by challenge and impact.
- Review salaries biannually to remain aligned with market trends.

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Based in Manchester, we are specialists in Technology, Digital, Engineering and Care recruitment, supporting professionals and companies across the UK. We provide permanent and contract staffing solutions, tailoring our approach to suit your requirements.

Founded in 2016, our commitment is to Listen, Understand, Consult and Deliver the best possible service. We truly value all our customers, both our clients and candidates, and believe in a quality over quantity approach to recruitment. With a multi-talented team on hand to offer assistance, our personalised approach means that you'll be able to find the ideal new hire or position in no time.

Chroma Technology & Digital Division

Chroma's Technology & Digital division is committed to providing a personal approach to the challenge of modern technology recruitment. With the Technology scene constantly evolving in the UK, it can be hard to keep up with demand. That's why our consultants specialise in supplying both permanent and contract professionals across the country and with any skill set.

To us, the personal and cultural fit is just as important as the technical, and getting the right balance is key.

GET IN TOUCH

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