

OCHO

BUILDING TEAMS

Salary Guide 2026



SALARY SURVEY 2026

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Permanent roles

Development & Engineering

Looking ahead, demand will stay high in areas like AI, cybersecurity, and cloud infrastructure. As regulations evolve, engineers with security and compliance expertise will be increasingly sought after. Employers offering competitive pay, flexibility, and engaging technical work will be best placed to attract and retain top software engineering talent.

£GBP	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Principal
.Net	28-35k	35-50k	50-75k	75-100k
Java	28-35k	40-55k	55-80k	80-130k
Golang	28-40k	40-55k	55-80k	80-130k
JavaScript	28-38k	35-50k	50-70k	70-120k
C++	28-35k	35-55k	55-80k	75-100k
Python	28-40k	40-50k	55-80k	75-110k

Permanent Roles

Software Management

The software management market in the UK and Ireland remains fast-moving, with strong demand for leaders who can drive digital transformation, scale engineering teams, and deliver complex projects. As investment continues in cloud, AI, and cybersecurity, businesses seek managers who align technical delivery with strategic goals, particularly in hybrid and remote environments that require collaborative, distributed leadership.

	£GBP
Director of Engineering	100-140k
Engineering Manager	75-85k
Senior Engineering Manager	85-100k
VP of Engineering	120-200k
Site Lead	90-120k
CTO	85-125k
CEO	100-220k

Permanent roles

Software Testing

Automation testers and SDETs often earn more than manual testers, with experienced professionals in London and Dublin earning salaries on par with developers. Regional markets like Belfast and Manchester offer strong pay with lower living costs. Contract roles remain lucrative, particularly in test automation, performance, and security testing. Looking ahead, testing will play an even greater role in digital delivery.

£GBP	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Principal
QA Automation Engineer	30-38k	35-50k	50-75k	65-80k
QA Engineer	28-35k	32-40k	40-55k	55-70k
SDET	30-40k	35-50k	50-65k	65-90k
QA Manager	50-85k			
Head of QA	80-100k			
Director of QA	85-110k			

Permanent roles

Data, ML & AI Engineering

With growing regulatory focus on ethics and privacy, professionals who can innovate while ensuring compliance will be in high demand. Emerging trends like edge computing, federated learning, and AI-driven cybersecurity will further shape the market. Employers offering advanced projects, large datasets, and strong development opportunities will attract top talent.

£GBP	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Principal
Data Analyst	25-35k	35-45k	45-55k	60-75k
Data Engineer	30-45k	40-60k	55-75k	75-95k
Data Scientist	30-40k	40-70k	60-90k	80-110k
Database Admin	25-32k	35-50k	45-65k	65-80k
ML/AI Engineer	30-50k	50-70k	65-85k	75-110k

Permanent roles

Infrastructure & Support

As cloud adoption, cybersecurity, and hybrid work expand, companies need infrastructure engineers, network specialists, and IT support professionals to manage complex, evolving environments. Skills in cloud platforms, virtualisation, automation, and endpoint security are especially sought after.

£GBP	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Principal
Application Support Analyst	28-32k	32-45k	45-65k	60-85k
Infrastructure Engineer	25-35k	35-50k	45-75k	60-90k
Network Engineer	25-35k	35-45k	50-70k	60-80k
1st Line Support	22-28k			
2nd Line Support	26-35k			
3rd Line Support	35-45k			

Permanent Roles

Cybersecurity

Businesses across sectors like finance, healthcare, and government are investing in talent to protect sensitive data, meet regulatory requirements (e.g. GDPR, NIS2), and guard against risks such as ransomware, phishing, and cloud vulnerabilities. Demand is high for professionals skilled in threat intelligence, incident response, IAM, and network security, especially as AI-driven attacks and regulatory pressures increase.

	£GBP
Application Security Engineer	35-80k
CISO	60-160k
Gov, Risk & Compliance	28-75k
Penetration Tester	35-90k
Security Architecture	70-120k
Security Engineer	30-80k
Security Operations Analyst	32-50k

Permanent Roles

DevOps & Cloud Engineering

DevOps and Cloud Engineering roles will continue to evolve as businesses adopt AI-driven automation, FinOps for cloud cost management, and advanced security practices such as zero-trust architectures. The increasing integration of AI and machine learning into cloud operations will create demand for engineers who can manage AI- powered observability, self-healing infrastructure, and automated incident response.

	£GBP
Cloud Administrator	40-60k
Cloud Architect	65-90k
Cloud Engineer	50-75k
Cloud Infrastructure Engineer	50-75k
Cloud Security Engineer	55-75k
MLOps	55-120k

Permanent Roles

DevOps & Cloud Engineering

With the widespread adoption of cloud-native technologies, organisations are investing in DevOps engineers, cloud engineers, and site reliability engineers (SREs) to optimise infrastructure, streamline development pipelines, and enhance system performance. The shift towards hybrid and multi-cloud strategies has increased demand for professionals skilled in AWS, Azure, and Google Cloud, as well as Infrastructure as Code (IaC) tools such as Terraform, CloudFormation, and Ansible. As businesses modernise their infrastructure, expertise in containerisation, Kubernetes, and cloud security has become essential.

£GBP	Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Principal
Cloud Platform Engineer	30-40k	40-60k	60-85k	75-120k
DevOps Engineer	30-40k	40-60k	60-80k	75-120k
Release Engineer	30-40k	40-60k	60-75k	75-110k
SRE	30-40k	40-60k	60-75k	75-110k

Permanent Roles

Project & Product Management

With increasing focus on AI, cloud, and digital innovation, businesses need managers who can connect tech teams and stakeholders while navigating remote or hybrid environments. Those who are adaptable, tech-savvy, and customer-focused will be best placed to thrive. Employers offering flexibility, clear progression, and impactful work will attract top talent.

	£GBP
Director of Product	90-120k
Head of Product	85-105k
Product Manager	55-80k
Product Owner	40-68k
Senior Product Manager	70-100k
VP of Product	110-150k

Contract Roles

Engineering

Specialist expertise is in particularly high demand. Contractors with niche skills in emerging technologies like machine learning, blockchain, and advanced cloud infrastructure are commanding premium rates. These professionals offer the flexibility businesses need to scale quickly, meet tight project timelines, and stay ahead in a competitive digital landscape. Remote and hybrid working trends continue to benefit the contractor market, expanding opportunities for cross-border collaboration and enabling companies to access talent without geographic limitations.

	Day rate (Outside IR35)
C# Developer	£450 - £750
C++ Developer	£500 - £850
Java Developer	£450 - £750
JavaScript Developer	£450 - £750
KDB Engineer	£600 - £1200
Python Developer	£500 - £850

Contract Roles

Cybersecurity & Systems

	Day rate (Outside IR35)
Application Security Engineer	£600 - £850
CISO	£650 - £1000
Cloud Security	£525 - £750
GRC Analyst	£500 - £650
Penetration Tester	£500 - £660
Security Architect	£575 - £875
Security Engineer	£300 - £550
Security Operations Analyst	£525 - £850

Contract Roles

Cybersecurity & Systems

	Day rate (Outside IR35)
Application Security Engineer	£600 - £850
CISO	£650 - £1000
Cloud Security	£525 - £750
GRC Analyst	£500 - £650
Penetration Tester	£500 - £660
Security Architect	£575 - £875
Security Engineer	£300 - £550
Security Operations Analyst	£525 - £850

Application Support

Application Support	£450 - £600
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Contract Roles

DevOps, SRE, MLOps

	Day rate (Outside IR35)
Site Reliability Engineer	£550 - £750
DevOps Engineer	£500 - £750
DevSecOps Engineer	£550 - £750
MLOps Engineer	£475 - £650
Platform Engineer	£500 - £750

QA

QA Automation Engineer	£490 - £650
QA Engineer	£400 - £550

Contract Roles

Change & Transformation

	Day rate (Outside IR35)
Implementation Consultant	£550 - £750
Product Management	£500 - £650
Product Owner	£550 - £650
Technical Business Analyst	£430-550
Technical Project Manager	£500-650
Management Consultant	£350-450
Programme Manager	£550-730
Scrum Master/ Agile Coach	£550-730

Network Engineering

Network Engineer	£450 - £600
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Now for the real question...

What Makes Ocho Different?

We're not a big agency chasing numbers. We're a close-knit, knowledgeable team who care deeply about who we work with and how we work.

Open conversations, not sales pitches

Curated talent, not CV volume

Human relationships at the heart of hiring

Ownership of long-term outcomes

That's why people come back to Ocho, time and again.

