

# Connecting Winners

The leading recruiter of bid and proposal professionals

# 2015 UK Salary Survey

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The **2015 UK Bid & Proposal Salary Survey** (the survey) represents the most comprehensive study ever undertaken.

**The survey successfully delivered against its 6 stated aims:**

- Provide employers and employees with accurate salary data
- Report on significant salary changes since the 2012 Survey
- Align salary data to specific roles and responsibilities, rather than job title alone
- Assess job satisfaction of those working within the bid and proposal industry
- Increase participation (800 in 2012)
- Deliver a bespoke online tool that allows individuals to benchmark their own salary and role against alternative locations, industries and experience levels.

*Please note all salaries discussed are an average of basic salary unless otherwise stated.*

*In total, 1200 people from across the UK contributed to the survey. We are confident that employers, employees, and self-employed consultants will find the results valuable for the purposes of salary benchmarking, staff retention, peer review and career planning.*

# Introduction



# Key Findings



The average industry salary across all roles is **£48,088**. The average age of professionals in our industry is **40**.



The average industry salary for women is **£43,099** (4% increase from 2012).



For men, the average is **£53,339** (0.3% increase from 2012). Across all those surveyed, men on average earn **23.8%** more than women (the difference was **28.6%** in 2012).

In real terms, women's basic salaries have kept track with inflation whilst men's have declined. Tracking inflation (CPI), the 2012 average female salary would now equate to **£43,004**. The male salary would be **£55,297**. In real terms, men effectively have **4%** less buying power whilst women **0.2%** more.

Heads of Bid Management are the best paid employees within our profession, earning **£69,263**. Document Managers are the lowest paid, earning **£29,954**. Bid Managers earn **£50,555** whilst Proposal Managers earn **£44,685**. Proposal Writers earn on average **£35,280**.

Bid Managers were on average the best paid contractors earning **£533** per day. Proposal Managers were a close second earning **£527** per day. These rates are approximately **5%** lower than those recorded in the 2012 survey.

The average man in our industry is **41** (42 in 2012) and the average woman is **38** (37 in 2012).

Homeworkers and field-based professionals attracted the highest basic salary - **£58,560**. Northern Ireland recorded the lowest salaries - **£35,833**.

298 (up from 214) different job title variations were recorded in the survey. Over **67%** (up from **64%** in 2012) of participants had a Bachelors Degree or higher. **92%** (equal to 2012) had A Levels or higher.

27% of respondents had achieved APMP Foundation Level or higher. **37%** of respondents felt the APMP Certification programme wasn't applicable to their current role. Disappointingly, **16%** said their organisations would not fund the training.

75% of respondents regularly worked unsocial hours but were able to claim it back as time off in lieu. **17%** of respondents worked late every night as well as weekends on a regular basis.

Over **48%** (up from **43%** in 2012) of respondents had no personal development plan. This increased to a worryingly high **65%** when looking solely at self-employed contractors.

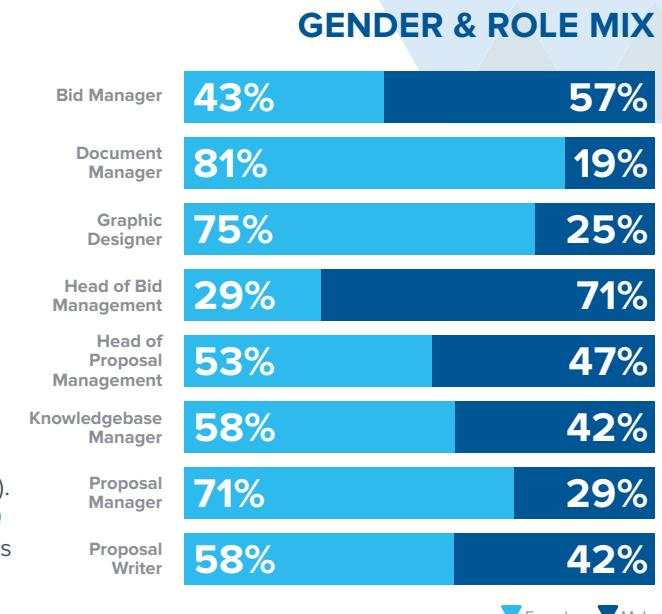
2% (3% in 2012) of respondents were unemployed / seeking work. **87%** were permanently employed. **11%** were self-employed or in temporary work.

94% (equal to 2012) of those surveyed would choose work-life balance over pure financial reward. Salary is clearly not the main driver in our profession.



# Analysis by Gender

The overall profession in 2015 is encouragingly more gender balanced than in 2012. Male dominance has dropped from **58%** of respondents to **52%**.



However, when looking at specific roles, significant gender imbalances still remain. The highest paid role in our industry - Head of Bid Management – is dominated by men (**71%**). Men also outnumber women in the second highest paid role - Bid Manager (**57%**). On the flip side, roles such as Document Manager, Graphic Designer and Knowledgebase Manager are dominated by females (**81%** in Document Management).

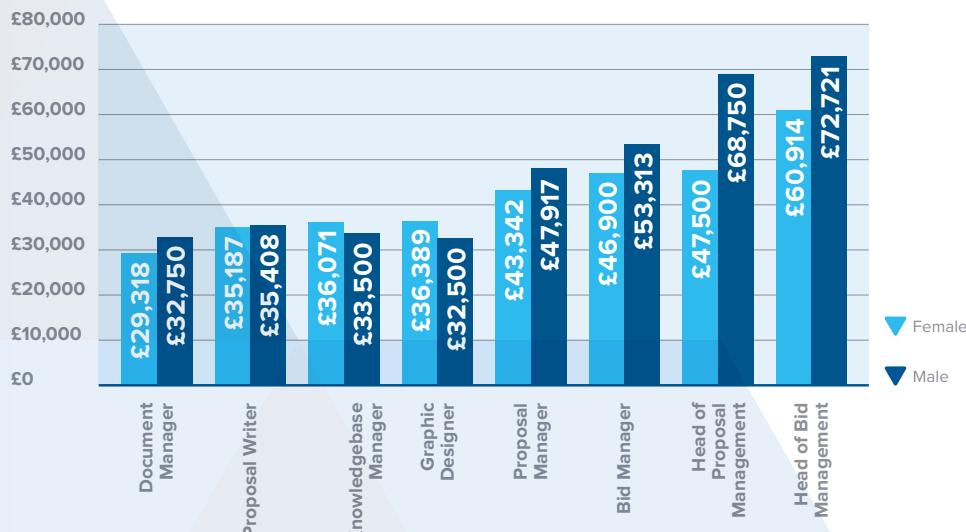
The average salary for women is **£43,099** (**4%** increase from 2012). For men, the average is **£53,339** (**0.3%** increase from 2012). Across all those surveyed, men earn **23.8%** more than women (the difference was **28.6%** in 2012). Women's basic salaries have kept track with inflation whilst men's have declined. Tracking inflation (CPI, <http://www.whatsthecost.com/historic.cpi.aspx>), the 2012 average female salary would now equate to **£43,004**. The male salary would be **£55,297**. In real terms, men effectively have **4%** less buying power whilst women **0.2%** more.



*The average salary for women is **£43,099** (**4%** increase from 2012). For men, the average is **£53,339** (**0.3%** increase from 2012).*

# Analysis by Age

## AVERAGE BASIC SALARY ROLE & GENDER DIFFERENCES

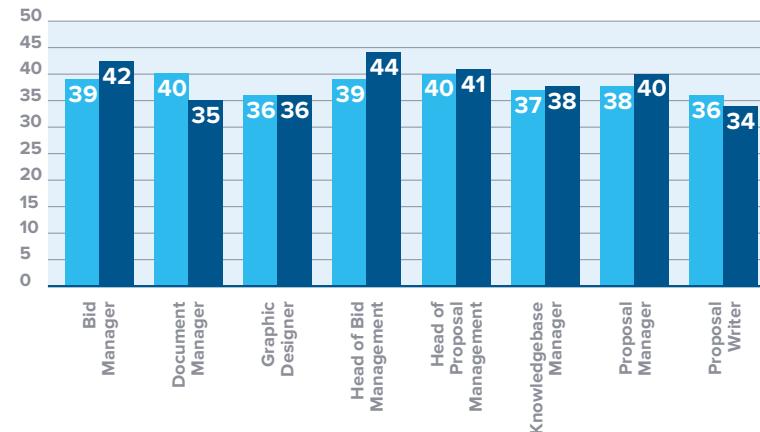


When we compare individual roles, salary differences are acute and a cause for concern. Men in Head of Proposal Management roles earn on average **£21,250 (45%)** more than their female equivalents. Men in Head of Bid Management roles earn on average **£11,808 (19%)** more.

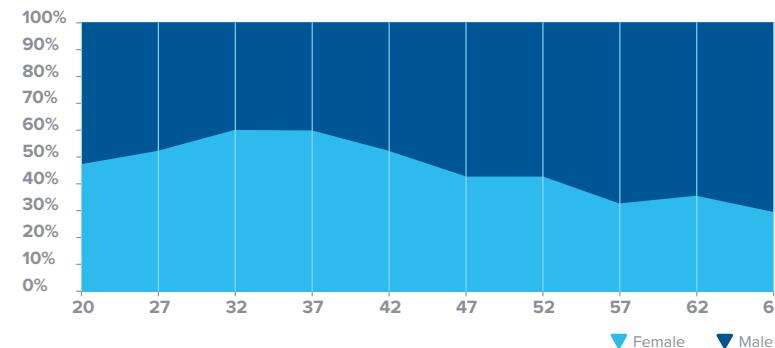
It's a similar pattern across all roles except Graphic Designers and Knowledgebase Managers where women outperform men by **11% (£3,888)** and **7% (£2,571)** respectively.

The average industry age is **40**. The average man in our industry is **41 (42 in 2012)**, and the average woman is **38 (37 in 2012)**. Across all core roles the average female age is lower, except for Document Manager and Proposal Writer. Female Bid Managers are on average **3 years** younger than their male colleagues.

## AVERAGE AGE & ROLE



## WORKFORCE MIX BY AGE (%)

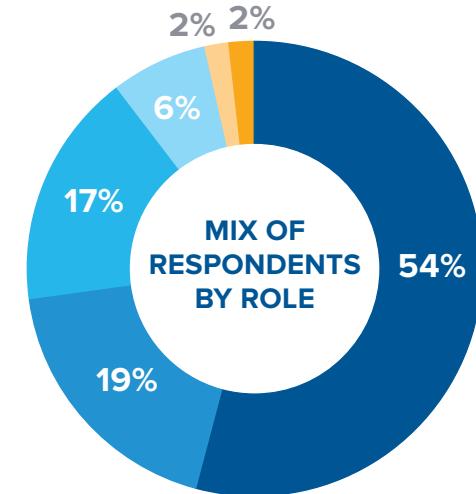


Females, whilst being on average younger than their male equivalents, exit the profession earlier. The balance of males to females is approximately **50:50** up until the age of 40. Beyond this age, it becomes male led (almost **3:1**).

In terms of age spread, **17%** of the workforce are in their 20s, **37%** are in their 30s, **26%** are in their 40s, **17%** in their 50s, and **3%** are in their 60s.

# Analysis by Role

**298** different job titles (**up from 214 in 2012**) were recorded in the 2015 Salary Survey. The survey required all participants to align themselves to 6 core roles to enable meaningful comparison. **54%** classed themselves as Bid Managers, **19%** as Proposal Managers, and **17%** as Proposal Writers (**up from 11% in 2012**). Document Managers made up **6%** and Knowledgebase Managers (**2%**) and Graphic Designers (**2%**) completed the mix.

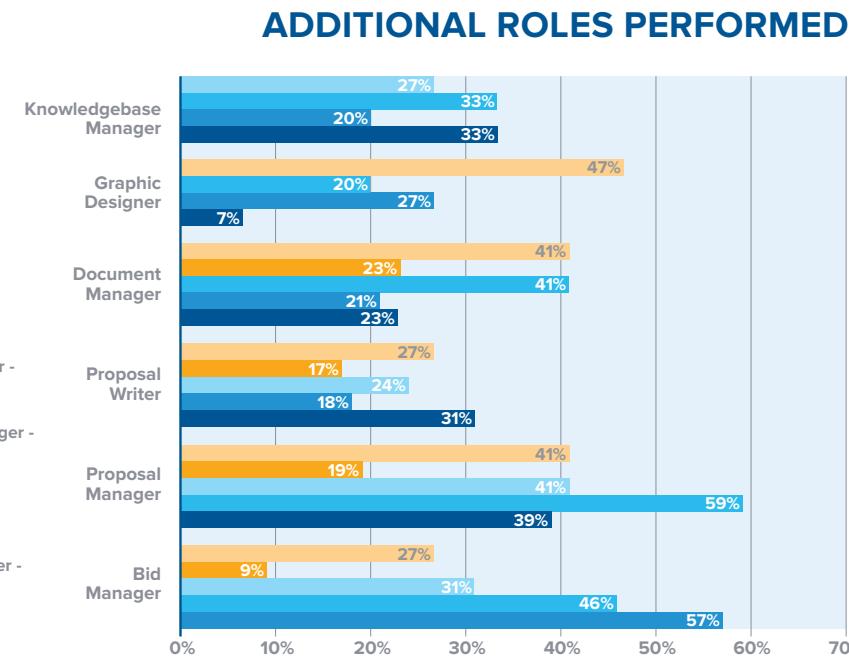


- ▼ Bid Manager
- ▼ Proposal Manager
- ▼ Proposal Writer
- ▼ Document Manager
- ▼ Knowledgebase Manager
- ▼ Graphic Designer

Primary Role	Respondents performing Secondary Role
Bid Manager	83%
Proposal Manager	82%
Proposal Writer	81%
Document Manager	80%
Graphic Designer	87%
Knowledgebase Manager	92%

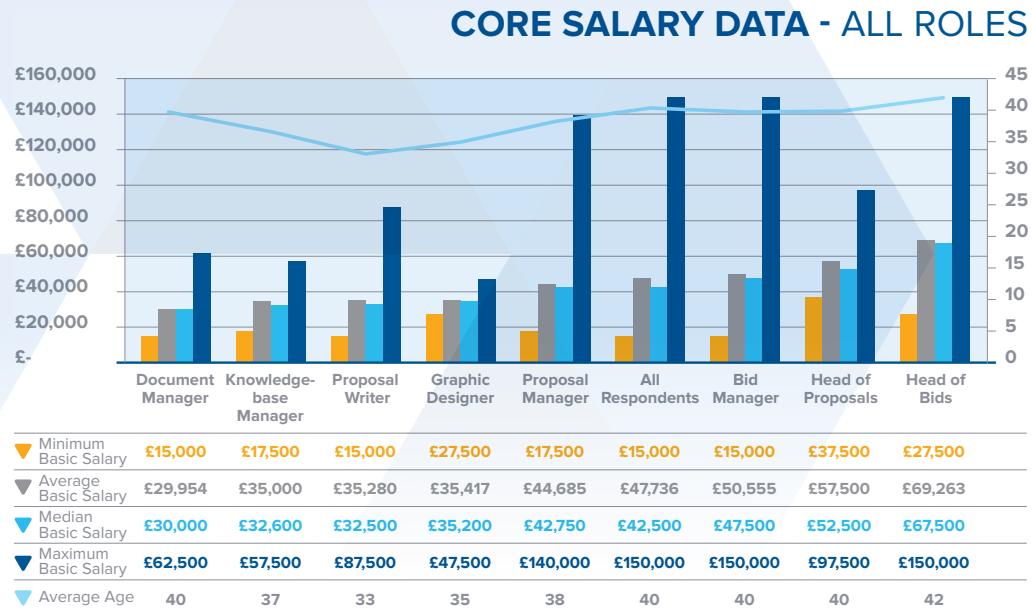
One of the biggest challenges and compromises we have when determining accurate salary benchmarks is separating out the primary role from any secondary roles and responsibilities. As highlighted in the table above, across each

primary core role we examined, a minimum of **80%** of respondents had at least one additional core role. The breakdown of additional core roles highlighted against Bid Solutions six core roles is shown below.



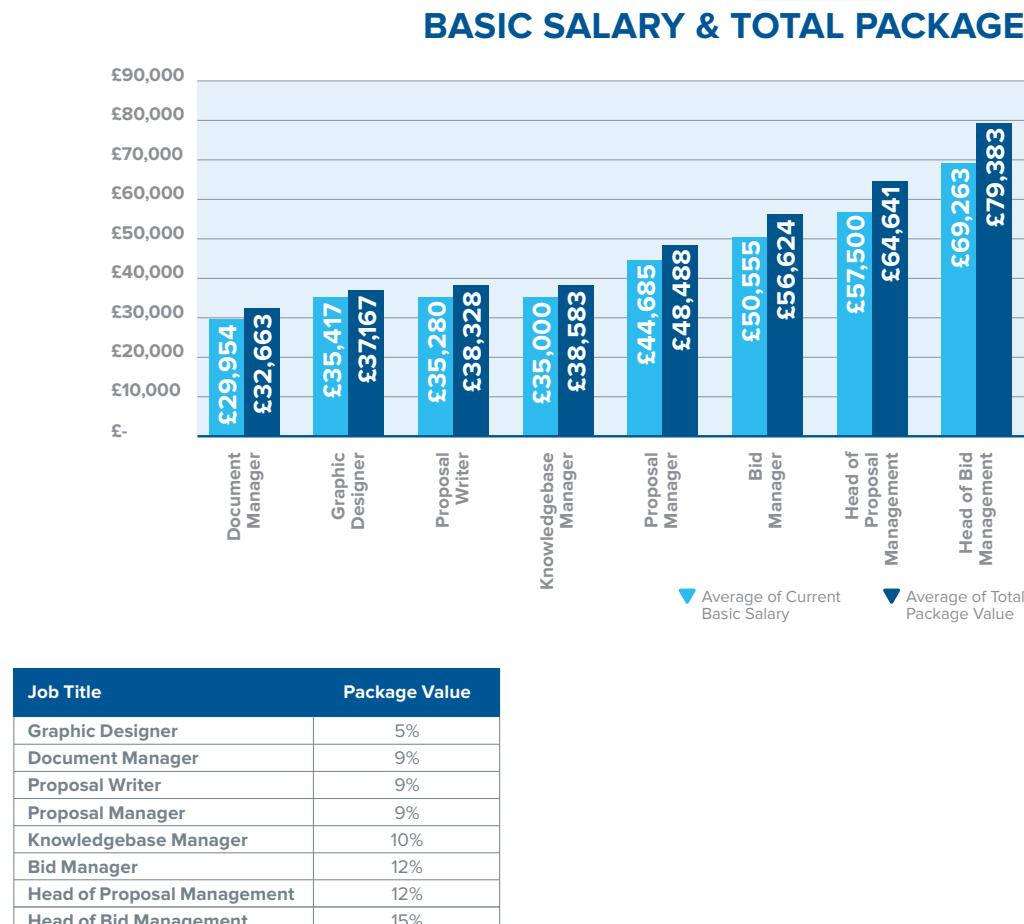


**41%** of all respondents cited Proposal Writing as a secondary responsibility. **38%** cited Proposal Management. Interestingly, **57%** of all Bid Managers said they also had to be Proposal Managers. Conversely, **39%** of Proposal Managers said they had to be Bid Managers. This level of crossover makes it very difficult to establish truly accurate salary benchmarks for 'pure' roles; any benchmark analysis must always take into consideration the mix of additional roles.



As the chart and table below illustrate, there are notable differences in total package values across the core roles. Whilst a Bid Manager can expect **12%** (£**6,000**) in extras made up of car, bonus, pension etc.), a Graphic Designer typically averages **5%** (£**1,500**) on top of their basic.

Heads of Bid Management attract the highest package value in percentage terms, adding **15%** (£**10,000**) to their basic salaries.



## EXPERIENCE & BASIC SALARY

There is a **direct correlation** between longevity in the profession and increased basic salary.

Graduate salaries of **£21,389** are at the mid-point of the national average for all graduate salaries (range of **£18,000-24,000**). The apprentice scheme is very new and data is limited so must be treated with caution. On a positive note for the profession, of the 399 people managers that responded, **83%** said they would consider hiring apprentices in the future.

Professionals who progress from 2 to 5 years' experience typically see a **35%** increase in salary in that 3 year period. Thereafter the percentage increases are smaller but consistent up until 20+ years' experience. It appears there is a natural upper basic salary limit (some might argue a glass ceiling) within our industry around the **£60-65,000** range. Impressively, 18 respondents had over 40 years' experience, however with such a small group data analysis is not reliable.

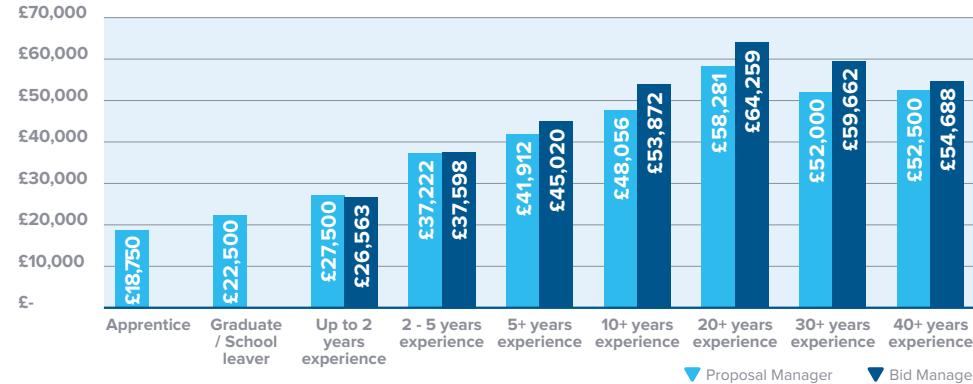
Senior Bid Managers (10+ years' experience) can expect to earn **£53,872**. Senior Proposal Managers can expect to earn **£48,056**.



The table below highlights what impact experience has on basic salary for each of the core disciplines. Whilst Bid Managers and Proposals Managers show progressive gains with experience, it is by no means an upward linear trend across all roles. Heads

of Proposals show slight regression over time. Graphic Designer salaries appear relatively flat despite increasing experience. It is difficult to provide justification for these discrepancies although location and industry do appear to have some influence.

## BID & PROPOSAL MANAGER - BASIC SALARY & EXPERIENCE



Industry Experience	Document Manager	Graphic Designer	Proposal Manager	Proposal Writer	Knowledge-base Manager	Bid Manager	Head of Proposals	Head of Bids
Apprentice			£18,750					
Graduate / school leaver			£22,500	£20,500				
Up to 2 years experience	£21,563	£32,500	£27,500	£26,974	£22,500	£26,563		£30,000
2 - 5 years experience	£29,722	£31,250	£37,222	£32,365	£28,500	£37,598	£72,500	£42,500
5+ years experience	£31,944	£47,500	£41,912	£37,419	£40,833	£45,020	£60,000	£55,278
10+ years experience	£27,857	£37,500	£48,056	£46,786	£32,500	£53,872	£54,167	£69,026
20+ years experience	£31,667	£32,500	£58,281	£35,000	£42,500	£64,259	£51,250	£77,696
30+ years experience	£47,500		£52,000	£42,500		£59,662		£88,200

Blank cells equate to insufficient data.

# Analysis by Experience



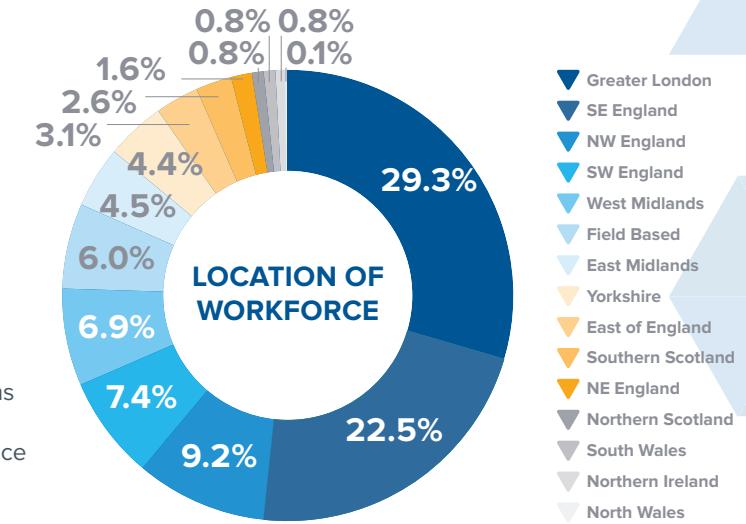
# Analysis by Geography

The distribution of the workforce across the UK has shown no notable change since the 2012 survey.

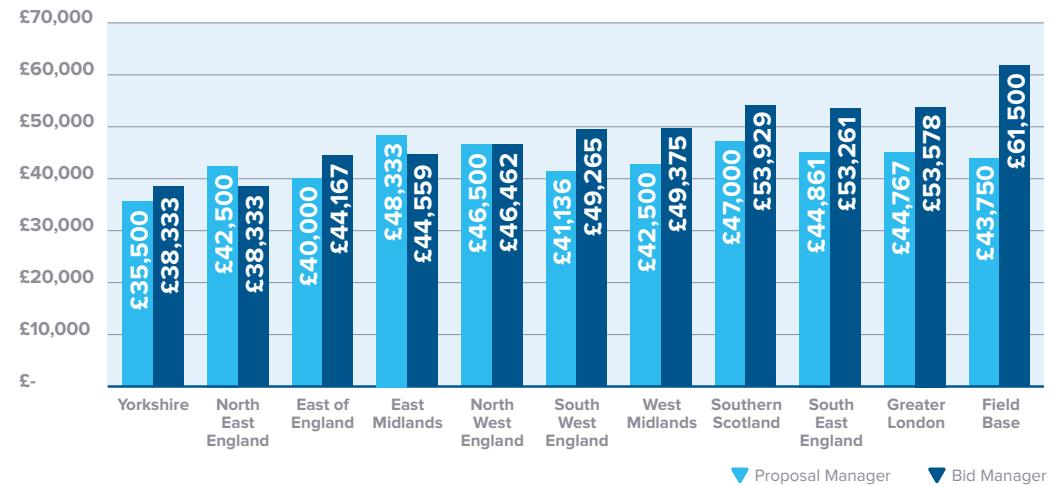
The South East / London regions account for **52%** of respondents. London alone had **29%** of respondents.

Less well represented were Northern Ireland (**8** respondents), Northern Scotland (**8** respondents), and Wales (**9** respondents). As a result, analysis by these under-represented regions is not reliable.

Career opportunities remain significantly more abundant in the Southern half of the country with those residing elsewhere competing for far fewer roles. Employers looking to build bid and proposal teams in less well represented locations may well experience significant skills shortages.



**BASIC SALARY BY LOCATION**



Excluding those areas with limited respondents, Field Based / Home workers had the highest salary (**£58,870**) across all primary roles. London (**£51,195**) and the South-East (**£50,823**) were the next best paid locations albeit some **17%** lower.

The lowest salaries across all primary roles were recorded in Yorkshire (**£37,845**).

Yorkshire was also the lowest paid location to be both a Bid Manager (**£38,333**) and a Proposal Manager (**£35,500**). The East Midlands and Southern Scotland recorded the highest paid Proposal Managers, with Field Based Bid Managers attracting the overall highest salaries.

## LOCATION & GENDER



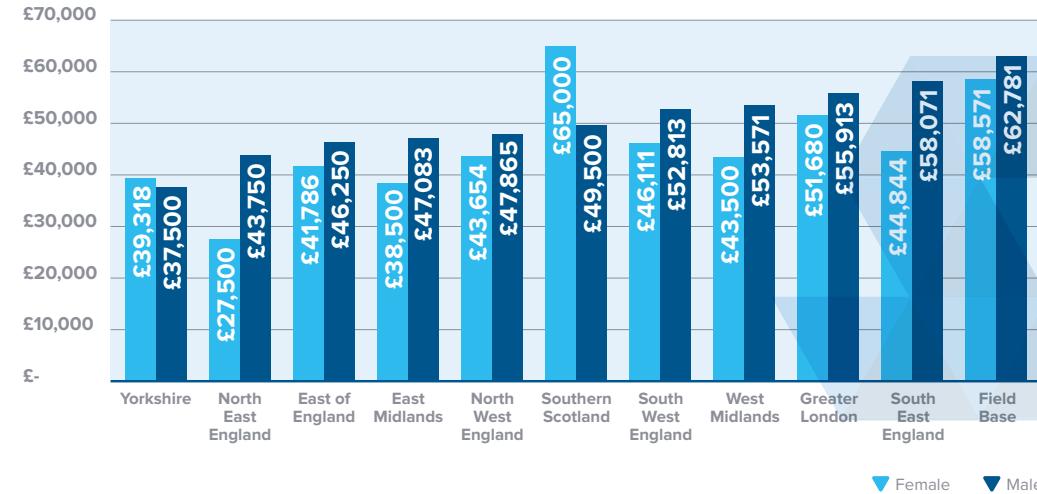
Women earn  
**18%**  
more than men in  
Southern Scotland

In 2012 we reported on the huge discrepancies between male and female salaries across all regions and roles. It's with real concern we report the continuance and general worsening of these trends. The table below highlights the extent of the problem. Only in Southern Scotland do women earn more than men (**18%**). Yorkshire has the smallest differences but here still it represents a **10%** difference. The table below shows the gender difference across all roles in each location.

Looking deeper into the data, Field Based male Bid Managers attracted the highest salaries of **£62,781** (7% higher than females). The lowest paid female Bid Managers were located in NE England (**£27,500**), whilst the lowest paid male Bid Managers were to be found in Yorkshire.

Male Bid Managers earn **37%** more than women in NE England. In SE England they earn **23%** more. In Scotland, female Bid Managers earn **31%** more.

## BID MANAGER BY LOCATION & GENDER



The East Midlands and Southern Scotland topped salaries for female Proposal Managers. In both these locations they outperformed men (over **32%** better in Southern Scotland).

The lowest paid Proposal Managers were located in Yorkshire. Men earn **30%** more than women in the NW England – the highest paid location for male Proposal Managers.

## PROPOSAL MANAGER BY LOCATION & GENDER

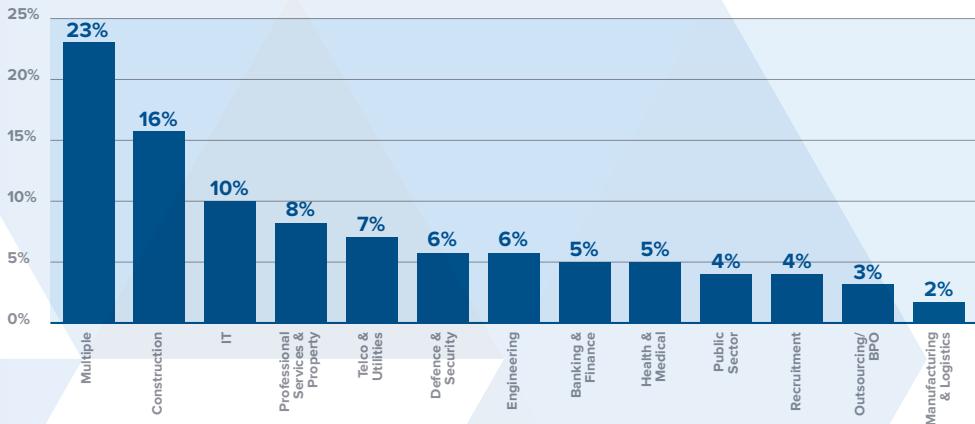


*Empty data fields result from insufficient data, preventing meaningful analysis*

# Analysis by Industry

Over 35 different industries were recorded in the survey. To enable meaningful analysis, these have been grouped into 13 core sectors. Construction, IT and Professional Services represented **34%** of respondents. The single largest group was comprised of those that were aligned to 'Multiple' industries (**23%**).

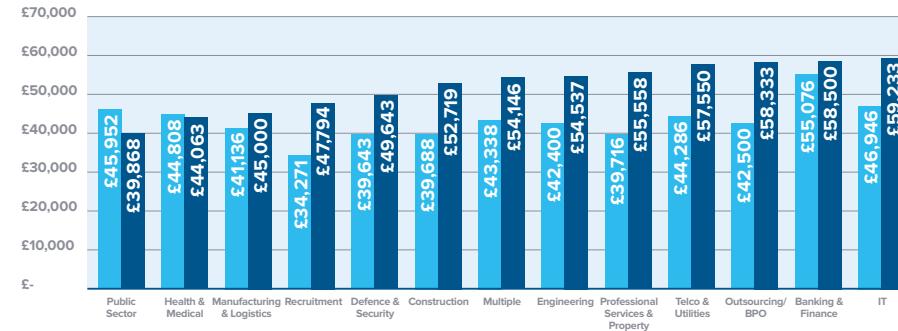
## TOTAL OF INDUSTRY RESPONDENTS



The IT industry has the highest average salary for men (£59,233), whilst Banking & Finance has the highest for women (£55,076). Men again earn more than women in all but two industries; Health & Medical and Public Sector.

The largest average salary discrepancies in favour of men appear within Professional Services / Property (29%), Banking & Finance (28%), and Recruitment (27%).

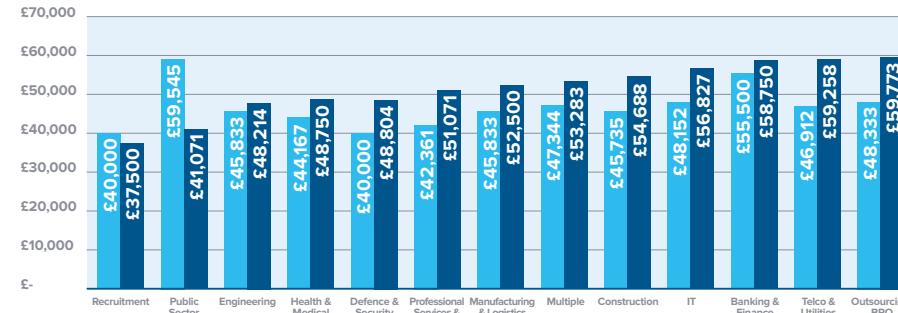
## AVERAGE INDUSTRY BASIC SALARY



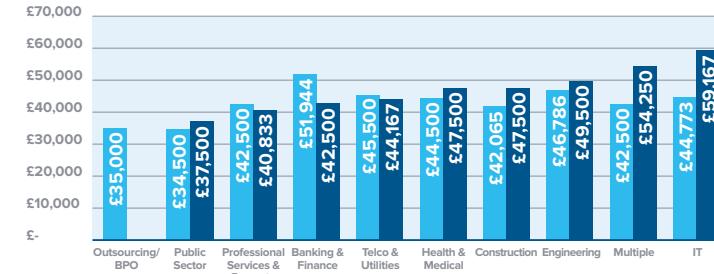
Across all industries, men earn on average **12%** more than women in the role of Bid Manager. Whilst women earn **45%** more in Public Sector, men earn **21%** more in Banking & Finance. The range of average salaries is modest with £15,812 separating the highest and lowest industries. Please note, only those industries that can return statistically relevant data are shown below.

Across all industries, men earn on average **10%** more than women in the role of Proposal Manager. Whilst women earn **22%** more in Banking & Finance, men earn **24%** more in IT. The range of average salaries is significant with £24,000 separating the highest and lowest industries. Please note, only those industries that can return statistically relevant data are shown below.

## AVERAGE INDUSTRY BASIC SALARY FOR BID MANAGERS



## AVERAGE INDUSTRY BASIC SALARY FOR PROPOSAL MANAGERS

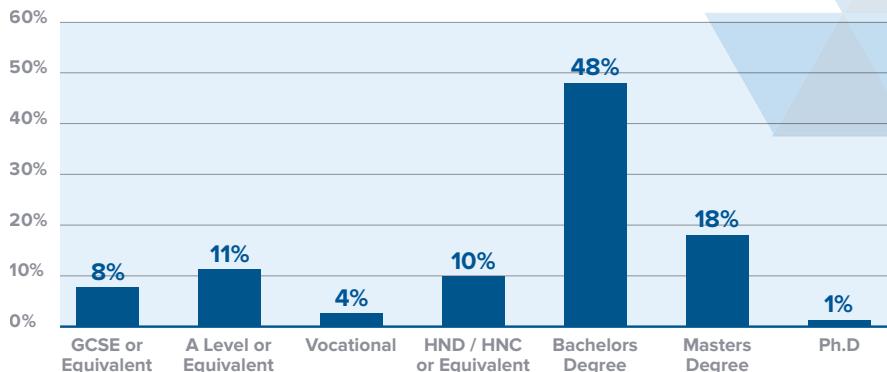




# Analysis by Qualifications

**67%** of participants had a Bachelors Degree or higher.  
**92%** had A Levels or higher.

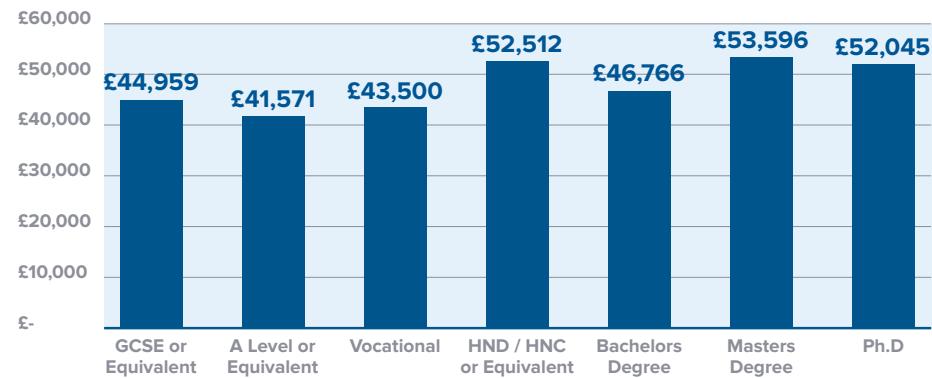
## HIGHEST QUALIFICATION



Those with GCSE / A levels were paid approximately **15-20%** less than the highest earners; those with Masters Degrees / PhDs /

HNDs. Participants with a Bachelors Degree earn **4%** more than those with GCSEs.

## HIGHEST QUALIFICATION & BASIC SALARY



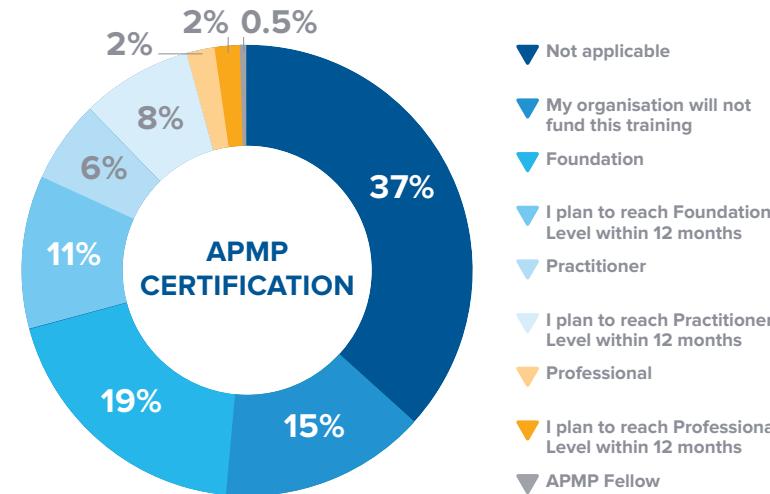


# Analysis by APMP Certification

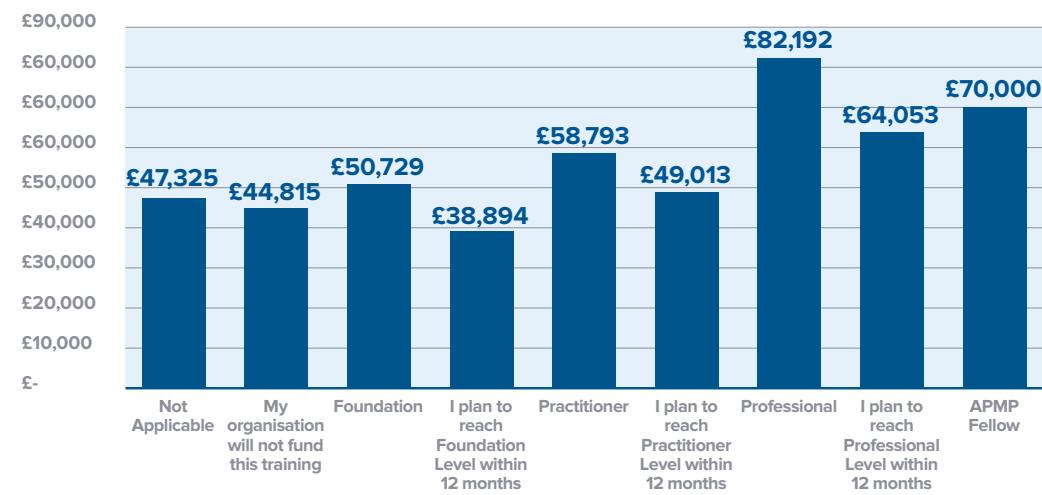
**27%** of respondents had achieved APMP Foundation Level or higher. **37%** of respondents felt the APMP Certification programme wasn't applicable to their current role.

**37%** of respondents felt APMP Certification was not relevant to their current career. Whilst those achieving Foundation Level was encouraging (**27%**), only **8%** had achieved Practitioner Level and only a further **2%** had achieved Professional Level.

There is strong evidence to suggest that achieving any level of APMP Certification will lead to increased salary. Professionally Certified individuals earn up to **55%** more than those who believe certification was not applicable. The majority of large organisations hiring new staff do now stipulate APMP Foundation as a minimum requirement. Disappointingly, **16%** said their organisations would not fund the training.



## APMP & BASIC SALARY



For those individuals aspiring to reach the next level of Certification, or indeed achieve Foundation level, there is strong evidence to suggest it will lead to increased financial reward. Progressing from Foundation (**£50,729** average basic salary) to Practitioner Level typically attracts a **14%** pay rise, whilst advancing further to Professional Level leads to a further **30%**

increase (**£82,192** average basic salary for Professionally Certified participants).

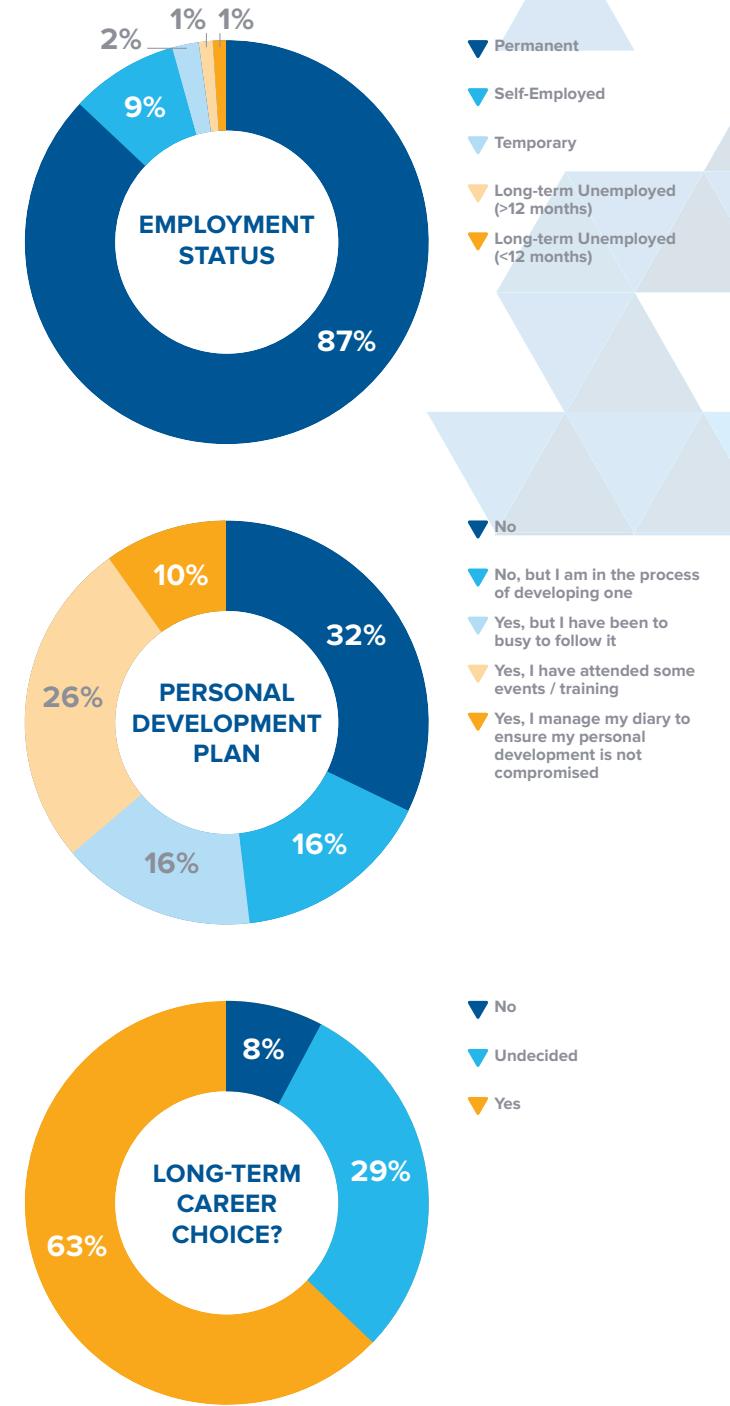
Of those respondents that felt APMP Certification wasn't applicable, **44%** were Bid Managers and **17%** were Proposal Managers. **10%** of Heads of Bid Management felt it wasn't applicable.



# Analysis by Working Practices

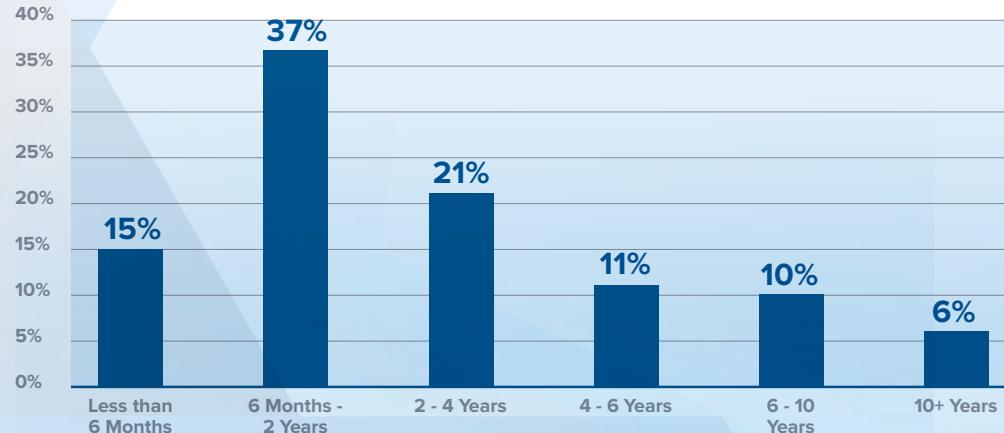
There are a number of factors that contribute to the overall **success and motivation of an employee**. Salary is one important factor but consideration must also be given to general working conditions, flexible working practices and personal development.

At **2%**, unemployment within the survey sample is relatively low. The workforce is dominated by permanent employees (**87%**) with self-employed and temporary staff forming only **11%** of the respondents. This mix is almost identical to the 2012 survey.



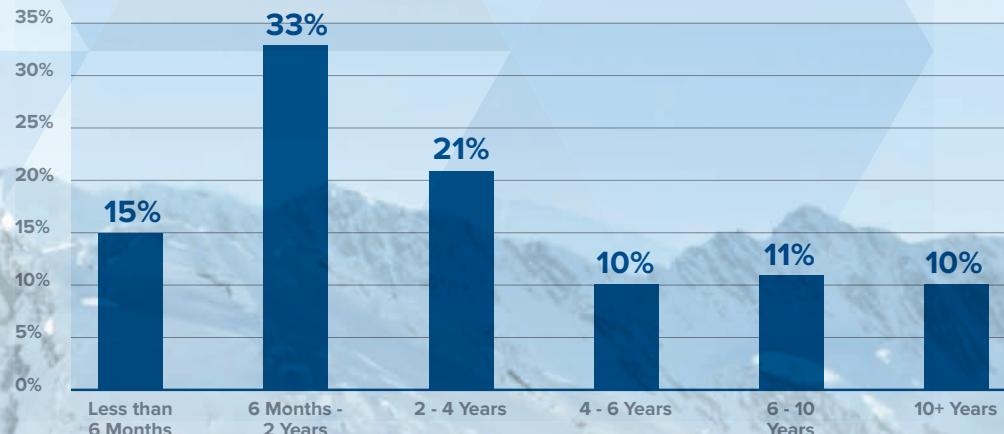
**52%** of respondents (up from **46%** in 2012) have been in their current role for less than 2 years. This confirms a very high staff turnover within the profession. Only **27%** of respondents have been in their current role for more than 4 years.

## TIME IN CURRENT ROLE

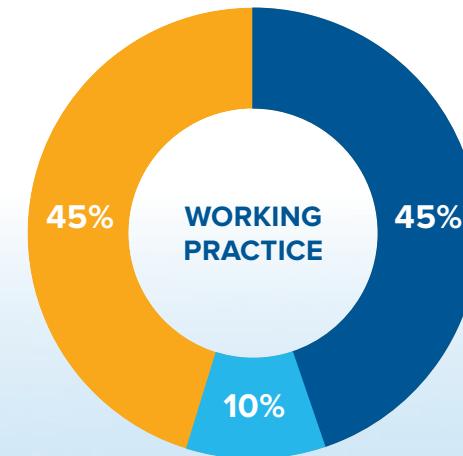


The total time in current company very closely mirrors time in current role. This suggests very few people are promoted or change role within a company. **48%** of all respondents have changed organisations within the last 2 years. Only **21%** of respondents have been within their current organisation for more than 6 years.

## TIME IN COMPANY



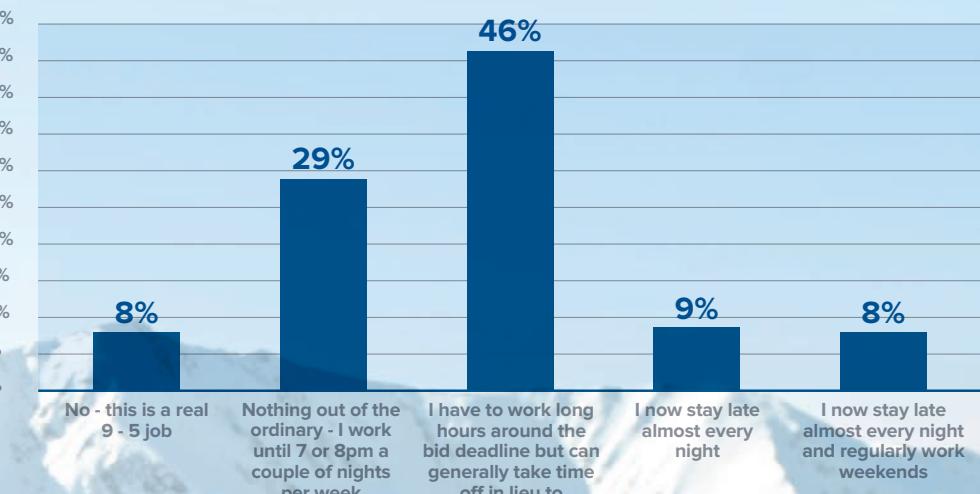
**45%** of the workforce is permanently office based. Just over **10%** have full home working status. These figures mirror the 2012 survey.



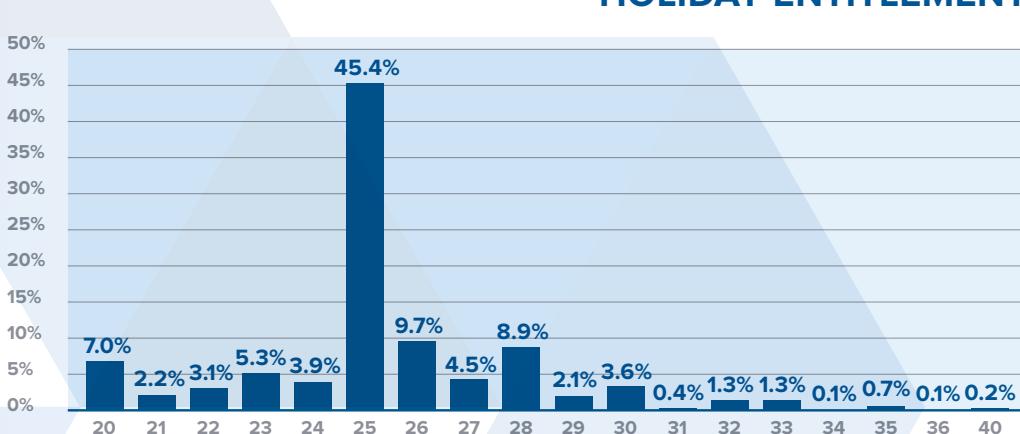
- ▼ Flexible to work from home when workload / business permits
- ▼ Home Based
- ▼ Office Based

Only **8%** of respondents worked their standard contracted hours. Almost **50%** of participants had to work long hours at bid deadline but could take the time back later. Almost one in six works late every night.

## WORKING HOURS

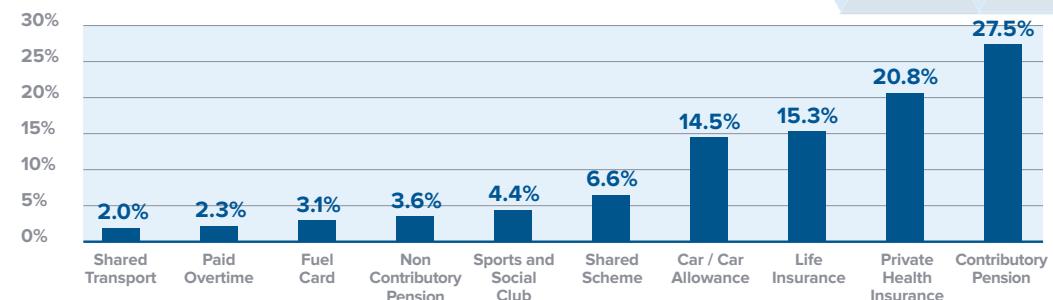
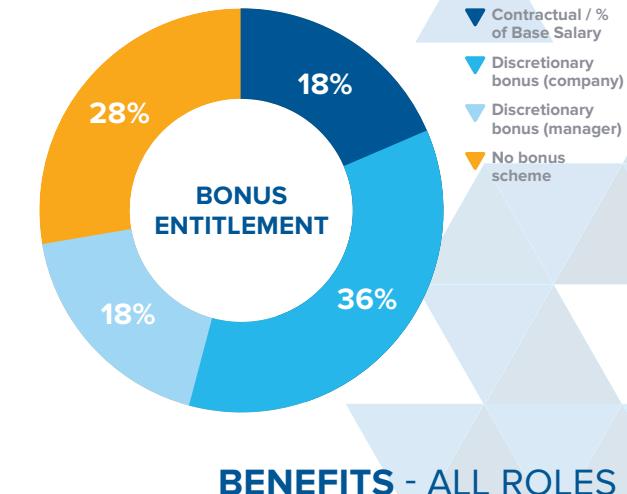


Over **78%** of respondents had a minimum of **25** days holiday per year. This is now considered the professions minimum allowance given the significant overtime worked.



# Analysis by Benefits

Over **28%** of participants were not eligible for any form of bonus. Of those that were eligible, only **5%** of bonuses were paid on wins / win rate. **3%** were paid on deal value / margin. With only **16%** of bonuses being based on individual performance, payouts are often considered a lottery, with the individual having very little influence over their final bonus. **70%** of bonuses are a blend of individual and company performance.



Whilst pension provision is now a requirement for all larger businesses, other benefits are clearly less accessible. Only **2%** of those surveyed were eligible for paid overtime – significantly out of kilter with the amount of people working additional hours. Surprisingly, very few organisations appear to incentivise employees to lower their carbon footprint,

with only **2%** offering green travel incentives. The table below lists benefits attracted by each role based upon the survey responses. Other benefits that were recorded but not listed include: Discounted Insurance, Flexible Benefit Scheme (choose from menu options), Dental Care, Flexi-working, and Season Ticket Loan for Rail Card.

	Paid Overtime	Car Allowance	Fuel Card	Share Scheme	Private Health	Life Insurance	Non-Contributory Pension	Contributory Pension	Sports & Social	Shared Transport
Bid Manager	5%	49%	10%	24%	63%	48%	12%	77%	13%	6%
Document Manager	20%	9%	6%	22%	44%	30%	6%	83%	20%	6%
Graphic Designer	17%	8%	0%	17%	58%	42%	8%	83%	17%	0%
Head of Bids	2%	63%	13%	16%	76%	59%	12%	87%	13%	9%
Head of Proposals	12%	47%	29%	6%	71%	65%	0%	82%	18%	6%
Knowledgebase Manager	17%	33%	0%	17%	50%	50%	25%	100%	0%	0%
Proposal Manager	3%	38%	8%	17%	59%	43%	6%	83%	12%	5%
Proposal Writer	10%	22%	4%	9%	44%	23%	12%	72%	8%	3%

# Analysis for Contractors / Self-Employed

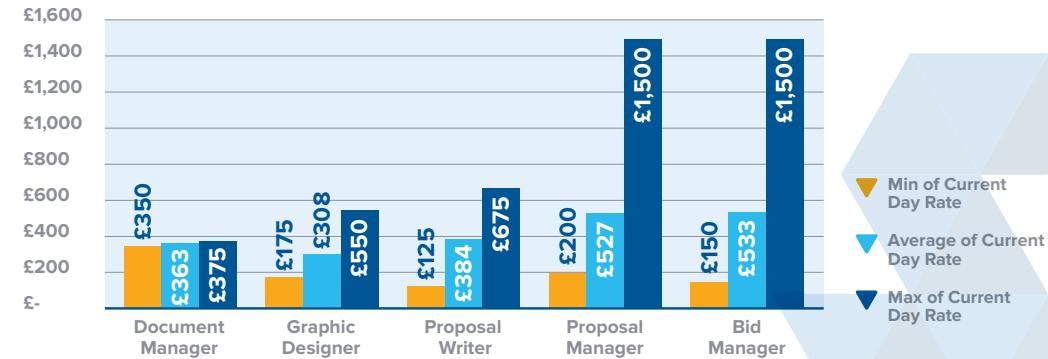
The contract market has changed dramatically during the last 5 years with large numbers of individuals now choosing **self-employment over permanent roles**. This has led to over-supply in some industries and regions and has generally kept day rates flat or in decline when compared to 2012 data.

Contractor utilisation rates have been adversely affected since the 2012 survey with competition for work high. **20%** of those surveyed worked for less than half of the past 12 month period. Only **41%** of contractors were engaged for more than 47 weeks of the year (down from **43%** in 2012).

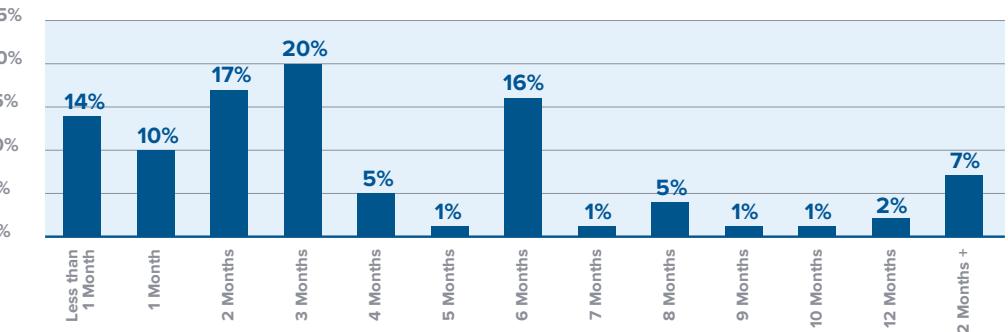
Bid Managers were on average the best paid contractors earning **£533** per day. Proposal Managers were a close second earning **£527** per day. These rates are approximately **5%** lower than those recorded in the 2012 survey. Bucking the trend are Proposal Writers; they have witnessed the largest increase with average day rates up almost **30%**. This is largely due to the scarcity of high quality Proposal Writers across all geographies and industries. The range of day rates within each core role is significant in all but Document Managers. The largest variance (**£1350**) is recorded in Bid Managers.

Since 2012, the trend towards shorter term contracts has intensified. Six month contracts have declined from **20%** to **16%** of all contracts, whilst contract durations of 1-3 months now account for **61%** of all contract durations. 12 month (+) contracts have halved, from **21%** in 2012 to just **9%** in 2015.

## CONTRACT DAY RATES



## AVERAGE CONTRACT DURATION



Of those surveyed, **65%** said their day rate had remained constant in the past 12 months, **10%** reported a decline, whilst **26%** reported an increase.

**35%** of contractors took 25 or more day's holiday. **45%** took fewer than 20 days. 1 in 5 took fewer than 10 days. With shorter-term contracts and increased competition for contracts, there is a significant reduction in holiday been taken.

Contractors are also neglecting personal development. **65%** had either no development plan in place or were too busy to follow the one they did have. Only **20%** proactively managed their personal development plan.

Only **29%** of those contractors surveyed had achieved APMP Certification. **11%** had not progressed beyond Foundation, **18%** had advanced to Practitioner, whilst **5%** had achieved Professional.

At Foundation Level there is no evidence to suggest that achieving Certification has a positive impact on contract day rate. Indeed, those with Foundation earned less (**£460** per day) than the average overall day rate (**£483** per day). However, it does positively impact rates for those achieving Practitioner (**£527** per day) and significantly so with Professional (**£960** per day).

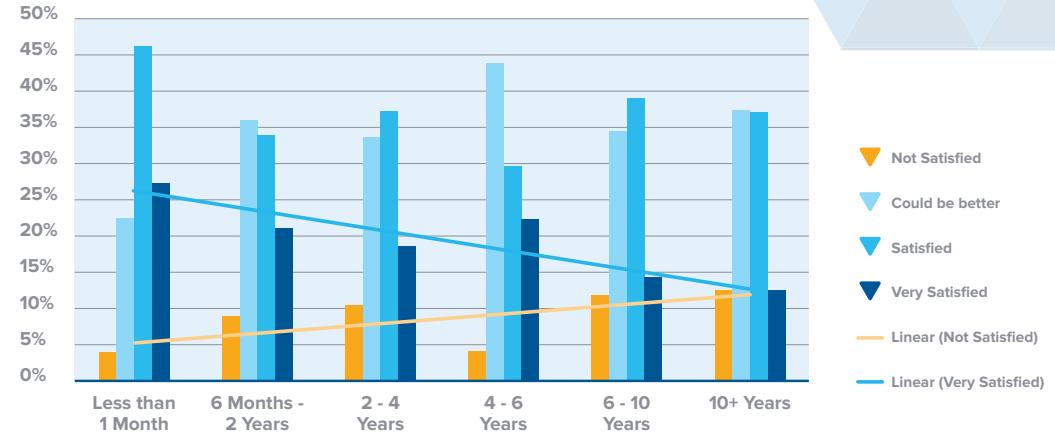
# Overall Satisfaction

Whilst considered a somewhat subjective measure, stated satisfaction levels provide useful insight into the mind-set of the participants and allow us to look beyond the numbers. Overall, **satisfaction levels have increased** significantly since 2012.

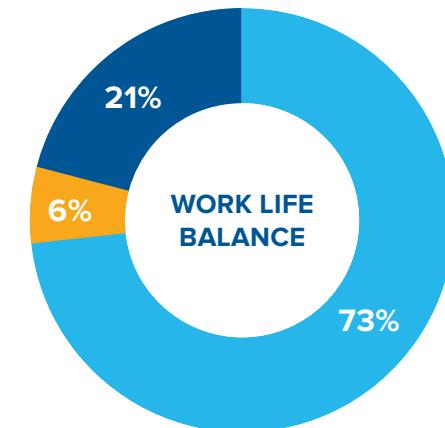
Row Labels	Role Satisfaction	Employer Satisfaction	Salary Satisfaction
Not Satisfied	8%	10%	14%
Could be Better	33%	26%	36%
Not Sure	0%	2%	0%
Satisfied	36%	34%	35%
Very Satisfied	23%	28%	15%

**50%** of respondents were 'satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with their basic salary (**44%** in 2012). Almost **60%** enjoy their job and **62%** are happy with their current employer – in 2008 only **46%** were happy with their employer. No one particular core role causes notable dissatisfaction or indeed satisfaction. As expected, job satisfaction trends downward over time. Over a 10 year period, those that aren't satisfied more than doubles.

## JOB SATISFACTION IN CURRENT ROLE



Whilst **21%** of respondents cited work-life balance as the key consideration, **73%** felt a healthy mix between work-life balance and financial reward was more important. Only **6%** felt financial reward was the single most important consideration.





# The Outlook

The **significant salary differences recorded across all industries, geographies and gender** suggest bid and proposal management is an immature profession undergoing significant and rapid change. Whilst our profession has long been established, the disjointed nature of its development and only partial acceptance as a specialist discipline within certain industries has resulted in significant salary discrepancies.

Without formal cross-industry (and ideally cross-border) agreement on job titles, roles and responsibilities, our profession will continue on its somewhat random path of development and remuneration. The leadership role APMP needs to assume in this area cannot be overstated.

With a new government elected and wider financial indicators all pointing to steady growth in the UK, the economic climate appears right for an upward trend in basic salaries within our profession over the next 12 - 24 months.



A large, abstract background composed of numerous blue triangles of varying sizes and shades, creating a sense of depth and motion.

**Bid Solutions**

Gainsborough House, 2 Sheen Road  
Richmond, Surrey TW9 1AE

Tel: +44 (0)20 8973 2461  
E-mail: [recruitment@bidsolutions.co.uk](mailto:recruitment@bidsolutions.co.uk)  
[www.bidsolutions.co.uk](http://www.bidsolutions.co.uk)