



Sewell
Wallis

**ACCOUNTANCY
& FINANCE
SALARY SURVEY
2025**

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MAKE YOUR FINANCE FUNCTION A PRIORITY THIS YEAR

I'm pleased to share our annual Accountancy & Finance Salary Survey with you this year. This report is full of valuable insights from within our network and our experienced recruitment team, intending to provide you with a comprehensive guide to industry trends, sector developments and salary information.

We've not seen much movement in salaries at transactional and part-qualified level; the biggest increases we've seen have come at newly qualified level and upwards. Companies are looking for skillsets that typically come at more senior levels, and this is pushing those salaries up even further.

We're also experiencing more appetite for private equity experience at the senior level. Yorkshire recorded an increase in private equity investment in 2024, according to the latest UK Private Equity Review from KPMG UK. The report found that investment in the region grew by 4.1 per cent in 2024, which is why we're seeing a higher demand for people with experience in PE backed businesses.

The promise of a SOX-like regime in the UK has been floating around for a while, and you should be paying attention to it. The change will drive large businesses to implement tighter financial and risk controls, and will necessitate a strong finance team across the board - if there are gaps in your staff, now's the time to fill them.

Looking forwards, we see even more change in the market due to more and more businesses investing in AI tech. Whilst the market is predicting a reduction in the need for manual processing jobs, the advice we'd give to those at their level is to make yourself indispensable. There's a demand for those with a head for data, and the skills to make it digestible to the business and its wider stakeholders - communication is key!

We're excited about finance in 2025; we're going to see many exciting changes, but Sewell Wallis are here to support you, whatever you need.



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The last 12 months have seen the rise of the fractional finance director, a highly experienced finance professional who will work with your business on a short term basis; likely part time. Unlike your traditional FD, who are usually employed full time and tend to come with a high salary, a fractional FD offers their expertise to more than one business, working flexibly and at a fraction of the cost.

Whilst any business can benefit from an expert providing financial oversight, there's certain situations where a fractional FD can be particularly useful; if your business is experiencing rapid growth, raising capital, going through a restructure, a merger or an exit, a fractional FD will be of huge benefit. We've detailed some of the other benefits they'll bring to your business below:

THEY'RE COST EFFECTIVE

For a smaller business, hiring an FD full time can be expensive, even if it feels necessary. A Fractional FD can give you access to the same level of expertise, at a more affordable rate.



THEY BRING STRATEGIC GUIDANCE

It's not just number crunching - a fractional FD can guide you on growth, risk and profitability, helping you make informed decisions and plan for long term success.



THEY FIT YOUR NEEDS

Your fractional FD will give you flexibility, and allow you to add support when you need it, during more critical periods. They're ideal for startups, scale-ups and businesses undergoing transformation.



THEY HAVE A BROAD SKILLSET

Your fractional FD normally works with multiple businesses in different industries, which will bring you cross-sector knowledge and a diverse range of experience and best practice.



THEY HELP SOLVE PROBLEMS

If you're struggling with reporting and risk management, a fractional FD can ensure those processes are robust, accurate and compliant, reducing risk for your business.



For a growing business, a fractional FD could be a good idea. Often well connected, they will come with existing contacts and experience to help assist with securing funding, managing investor relations, and preparing for venture capital or bank loans - a strong addition to a driven team.



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We've seen growth and change across Yorkshire over the last 12 months. Leeds remains one of the UK's top financial hubs outside London, with a booming professional services sector. The city is home to major banks, fintech companies, and legal firms that continue to expand, along with us seeing growth in the professional services sector across the wider region. We've also seen growth across Yorkshire's digital industry, with healthy projections for how many jobs this may create.

91%

of surveyed Yorkshire-based private enterprises are confident of delivering growth in 2025*

According to KPMG UK's first ever Private Enterprise Barometer, more than nine in 10 (91%) private business owners in Yorkshire and the Humber are confident of delivering growth in 2025.

76%

of the people we surveyed have received a payrise in the last 12 months

We've seen an increase in salaries across South and West Yorkshire, with average salaries increasing, as well as 76% of the people we surveyed having received a payrise in the last twelve months. We're also experiencing more people changing roles, with over 50% of those surveyed either having changed roles in the last year, or wanting to move roles in the next twelve months.

23%

of people surveyed have changed roles in the last year, with 35% thinking they'll move jobs in the next 12 months



We're seeing a healthy influx of candidates across both transactional and senior finance roles, with a lot of our clients looking for staff with wide skillsets, especially those who are technologically savvy. With many businesses investing more in automation and analysis, ensuring you're keeping up with the times will ensure career growth throughout 2025.



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Once, transactional roles were purely data entry focused, concerned with transaction processing. We're seeing a shift towards businesses preferring their transactional staff to be able to offer insights and contribute to strategic decision making. To succeed in the transactional finance world in 2025, you need to develop a more diverse skillset.

67%

of CFOs prioritise hiring finance professionals with analytical and strategic skills over purely transactional expertise (research by EY)

Technological advancements in automation, AI and machine learning have reduced the time taken for many transactional tasks, with a lot of routine tasks like invoice processing and reconciliations being handled by increasingly sophisticated software. Manual workloads have reduced by almost 40%, and the staff who work in transactional teams need to be adaptable, and open to learning how this new technology works. Invest in your own continuous learning, seeking cross-functional experience through projects outside of your core role. Keeping yourself informed of trends will also give you a boost.

The skills below in the graphic are great places to start for anyone looking to upskill in 2025.



Data Analytics & Interpretation



Technology Proficiency



Strategic Thinking & Business Acumen



Communication & Collaboration



Problem Solving & Adaptability



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Why isn't finance, once seen as a safe and typically lucrative bet, in vogue with the younger generation? According to those in the sector that were surveyed, there are now other fields offering better compensation, and a career in finance now offers less security and stability than it was traditionally believed to. The big one, in our opinion, that's turning Gen-Z's heads away from finance as a career path, is the lack of work life balance.

Gen-Z is typically more in tune with their mental health, and flourish in environments where check-ins, feedback and touchpoints are the norm. These are easy things to implement, and through use of these tools, you'll find they settle into their role easily. Ensuring clear expectations are provided to them, and that there's a career path laid out in front of them with transparent goals is also important.

51% of finance professionals wouldn't recommend a job in finance to potential Gen-Z talent, revealed in new research conducted by Medius

The finance industry can be stressful, but it can also be hugely rewarding. The UK's finance industry is currently a hotbed of exciting and innovative technology, which is another facet of a role that can be appealing to Gen-Z. Finance isn't all spreadsheets and saying no to fun ideas; with the rise of business partnering roles, more and more businesses are positioning their finance team front and centre, allowing their personalities to shine through and them to be integral to business critical decisions. It's all about how you sell yourself and the business you work for.



Firms that recognise and respond to the shifts in attitudes between generations, by doing things like ensuring work-life balance is a priority, keeping flexibility at the forefront of their minds when building career paths for new staff, and making sure they're keeping up to date with modern technologies available to them - these firms will be better positioned to attract and retain Gen Z talent long-term.



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Technology is transforming accounting in the UK in several ways. We're seeing processes being made more efficient, data being utilised in more complex ways and automation reducing errors across the industry. What are the things making the biggest waves?

The trend towards automation and, of course, AI in modern finance teams is becoming more and more prevalent. We're seeing a lot of teams adopting cloud-based accounting software like Xero, QuickBooks and Sage to automate their day-to-day tasks. We're also seeing the introduction of AI tools to help with data entry, finding errors and even to predict cash flow.

51% of UK businesses plan to 'redirect investment from staff to AI', according to research by Boston Consulting Group

The move towards cloud accounting means that clients and accountants can collaborate seamlessly, from anywhere. It's also a boon from a number of other perspectives: the sustainability of the industry increases as there's less reliance on paper-based systems; security improves as we move towards encrypted and backed-up systems. There are a lot of positives. But have we properly considered the negatives that could arise from this shift?

With 43% of UK businesses planning to prioritise their investment in AI, and 51% actually planning to redirect their investment in staff to more AI based models, one of the biggest challenges the UK finance industry will face is job displacement. Automation may replace some roles, which will require reskilling current staff, and will also reduce the roles that need filling. We also need to keep in mind that AI and machine learning aren't perfect: businesses need to balance human judgement with the insights gained from AI tools.

“ Speaking to numerous senior finance professionals, the general feeling is that AI is going to transform the industry, improving efficiency in data processing, and offering a new level of insight. The thought is that it will significantly reduce repetitive tasks and allow more time to be spent on strategic decision making, but that we should take care relying on it too much. It won't replace your finance team's ability to think critically and make ethical considerations!



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We see a pattern of companies hiring graduates with qualification exemptions, and fast tracking them into Management Accountant or Finance Business Partner roles. This might help you fill a gap in your team quickly, but many businesses fail to retain these employees long term due to a lack of structured career planning. This somewhat short-sighted approach can cost businesses more than they realise.

41% of finance professionals don't feel they have a strong idea of their career path

Employers often invest in upskilling their part-qualified talent to a mid-tier level, but they don't consider longer-term career plans for them. Without a clear roadmap for their progression, staff will quickly realise there are better opportunities elsewhere. If your only focus in hiring is on filling gaps rather than mapping out where you want your staff to go long term, you'll continuously struggle with retention. Consider how you can develop part-qualified accounting talent into your future leadership team.

What advantages does long term planning give?



By investing in proper career mapping, businesses will reduce recruitment churn, save money, and create a strong finance function with a loyal and skilled workforce. The short-sighted approach of hiring part-qualified accountants without a retention strategy in place will likely result in repeated hiring cycles and mounting costs. Engaging in career conversations with your staff, and working with them to provide structured development is a much better plan in the long run.



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BENEFITS: ARE WE HAPPY?

Employees seem to have an overall level of satisfaction with the benefits they have, at least on the surface. When you dive deeper and look at the benefits that people rank as more important, it can give an insight into the things that finance professionals find important in their day to day life.

We're still seeing a focus around work-life balance being important to people: over two thirds of people work either hybrid or fully remotely, and find it beneficial to their life. Parental leave and access to private medical care were also rated as important to those who took our survey, with a strong pension being the highest rated benefit.

67%
work either a hybrid or remote model and feel they benefit from it

Funded study support seems to be one of the things the finance industry is a little lacking with. There is a strong and constant desire from hiring managers for qualified, or at the least part-qualified, talent, and with over half of people surveyed not receiving any support with their qualification from their employer. With exams costing into the thousands, they're expensive to self-fund, and aren't an immediate guarantee to a 'better' role.

58%
of people surveyed didn't get any financial study support from their employer



Companies need to take into account that their employees have lives outside of the office. The ones that recognise that if they want employees with the most up to date knowledge and skills, they need to tailor benefits and contribute to their studies, will be the businesses that will build loyalty and retain talent for years to come.



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WEST & NORTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
AAT Level 2	£24,000	£27,000
AAT Level 3	£24,500	£29,000
AAT Level 4	£25,000	£33,000
Purchase Ledger Clerk	£24,000	£30,000
Purchase Ledger Supervisor	£28,000	£36,000
Purchase Ledger Manager	£35,000	£55,000
Sales Ledger Clerk	£24,000	£32,000
Sales Ledger Supervisor	£28,000	£36,000
Sales Ledger Manager	£30,000	£46,000
Credit Controller	£27,000	£36,000
Senior Credit Controller	£32,000	£40,000
Credit Control Team Leader	£34,000	£42,500
Credit Manager	£35,000	£65,000
Head of Credit	£60,000	£85,000
Legal Cashier	£24,000	£35,000
Billing Assistant	£25,000	£32,000
Accounts Assistant	£25,000	£33,000
Payroll Administrator	£24,000	£28,500
Payroll Clerk / Assistant	£27,000	£36,000
Payroll Supervisor	£33,000	£42,000
Payroll Manager	£40,000	£78,000
Transactional Manager	£40,000	£90,000

SOUTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
AAT Level 2	£24,000	£27,000
AAT Level 3	£24,500	£29,500
AAT Level 4	£25,000	£33,000
Purchase Ledger Clerk	£24,000	£30,000
Purchase Ledger Supervisor	£28,000	£36,000
Purchase Ledger Manager	£35,000	£45,000
Sales Ledger Clerk	£24,000	£32,000
Sales Ledger Supervisor	£30,000	£40,000
Sales Ledger Manager	£40,000	£48,000
Credit Controller	£27,000	£32,000
Senior Credit Controller	£32,000	£38,000
Credit Control Team Leader	£34,000	£40,000
Credit Manager	£35,000	£65,000
Head of Credit	£60,000	£80,000
Legal Cashier	£28,000	£35,000
Billing Assistant	£25,000	£30,000
Accounts Assistant	£25,000	£30,000
Payroll Administrator	£24,000	£30,000
Payroll Clerk / Assistant	£27,000	£35,000
Payroll Supervisor	£35,000	£45,000
Payroll Manager	£40,000	£70,000
Transactional Manager	£35,000	£70,000

WEST & NORTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
Currently studying CIMA/ACCA	£28,000	£50,000
Early Stage CIMA/ACCA	£28,000	£35,000
CIMA/ACCA Finalist	£45,000	£50,000
Assistant Accountant	£28,000	£35,000
Finance Analyst	£30,000	£50,000
Management Accountant	£35,000	£50,000
Finance Business Partner	£44,000	£50,000
Finance Manager	£45,000	£55,000

SOUTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
Currently studying CIMA/ACCA	£28,000	£50,000
Early Stage CIMA/ACCA	£28,000	£35,000
CIMA/ACCA Finalist	£45,000	£50,000
Assistant Accountant	£28,000	£35,000
Finance Analyst	£30,000	£50,000
Management Accountant	£35,000	£50,000
Finance Business Partner	£40,000	£50,000
Finance Manager	£45,000	£55,000

QUALIFIED ACCA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£50,000	£55,000
2/3 years PQE	£55,000	£65,000
4+ years PQE	£65,000	£70,000

QUALIFIED CIMA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£50,000	£55,000
2/3 years PQE	£55,000	£65,000
4+ years PQE	£65,000	£70,000

QUALIFIED ACA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£50,000	£57,000
2/3 years PQE	£57,000	£65,000
4+ years PQE	£65,000	£75,000

QUALIFIED ACCA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£45,000	£51,500
2/3 years PQE	£54,500	£60,000
4+ years PQE	£60,000	£70,000

QUALIFIED CIMA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£45,000	£51,500
2/3 years PQE	£54,500	£60,000
4+ years PQE	£60,000	£70,000

QUALIFIED ACA	MIN	MAX
Newly Qualified	£50,000	£55,000
2/3 years PQE	£55,000	£70,000
4+ years PQE	£70,000	£100,000

SENIOR ROLES

WEST & NORTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
Financial Controller - SME	£60,000	£85,000
Financial Controller - PLC	£80,000	£130,000
Finance Director - SME	£80,000	£130,000
Finance Director - PLC	£110,000	£150,000
Chief Financial Officer	£100,000	£270,000

SOUTH YORKSHIRE	MIN	MAX
Financial Controller - SME	£60,000	£85,000
Financial Controller - PLC	£80,000	£130,000
Finance Director - SME	£80,000	£130,000
Finance Director - PLC	£130,000	£250,000
Chief Financial Officer	£100,000	£270,000

AUDIT	MIN	MAX
Semi-Senior	£25,000	£32,000
Audit Senior	£35,000	£40,000
Audit Assistant Manager	£40,000	£50,000
Audit Manager	£50,000	£60,000
Audit Director	£80,000	£110,000

ACCOUNTS	MIN	MAX
Business Services / Client Manager	£45,000	£55,000
Client Accountant	£40,000	£50,000

TAX	MIN	MAX
Tax Assistant	£25,000	£32,000
Tax Accountant	£40,000	£45,000
Tax Manager	£50,000	£70,000
Tax Partner	£80,000	£110,000

PRACTICE SALARIES - SOUTH YORKSHIRE

AUDIT	MIN	MAX
Semi-Senior	£25,000	£32,000
Audit Senior	£32,000	£40,000
Audit Assistant Manager	£48,000	£58,000
Audit Manager	£50,000	£61,500
Audit Director	£82,000	£105,000

ACCOUNTS	MIN	MAX
Business Services / Client Manager	£45,000	£55,000
Client Accountant	£40,000	£50,000

TAX	MIN	MAX
Tax Assistant	£25,000	£32,000
Tax Accountant	£40,000	£45,000
Tax Manager	£50,000	£75,000
Tax Senior Manager	£75,000	£90,000
Tax Partner	£90,000	£110,000

WE ARE SEWELL WALLIS

We're experienced recruiters, and we're good at what we do - we'll get to know you and your business inside and out, we'll keep you up to speed with everything that's going on, and we tackle every assignment with the energy of a new recruiter, combined with the lived experience of one that's been there and seen it all before. And it works. Our clients come back again and again, and our networks are full of candidates who reach out when they're looking for something new, and recommend us to their networks.

We're not a generalist agency.

We focus entirely on the Yorkshire market, with offices in Sheffield and Leeds; our networks are concentrated in the areas where our clients are located, and we consistently work with candidates who will be able to commute to those locations.

We exclusively focus on Finance, HR and Business Support roles, with consultants who also concentrate on executive search when clients have a requirement.

Our team understand the ins and outs of their specialisms, and can work with you to find talent that will be a good personality match with your current teams. We can also advise on things like qualification pathways, and salary benchmarking, and are able to provide other consultative advice beyond just who we think you should hire.

We're passionate about business and about people, and we love bringing the two together. If you're looking for a recruitment partner that will work side by side with you to help you reach your strategic goals, we're the one for you.

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