

Healthcare Communications workforce insight and salary survey report 2018

Supported by:

MedComms
Networking

2018

Contents

Foreword	3
About the survey	3
Key findings	4
Average basic salaries by role - UK.....	5
Gender pay gap - UK.....	6
Gender pay gap by seniority.....	6
Regional pay variation - UK	7
Expected pay rises	8
Benefits.....	9
Flexible Working.....	10
Training.....	11
Job seeking	12
What factors are most important?.....	13
Employer recruitment priorities and plans	14
Freelancers	15
Survey data	16
Gender	16
Age.....	16
Employment status.....	17
Countries	17
UK region	17
Experience	18
Qualifications.....	18
Summary & conclusion.....	19
Paramount Recruitment, Healthcare Communications Team	20

Foreword

For over 15 years Paramount Recruitment has been connecting people with career opportunities within the Healthcare Communications sector. We are constantly asked, by both companies and candidates, for our advice about salaries, rates and market trends and we thought it would be highly beneficial to undertake research to help in this regard.

Salary surveys are an extremely useful tool for both employers and candidates when looking to recruit employees or candidates wanting to progress their career. It is also extremely valuable to find out where the demand is for talent and understand the demographics of the workforce.

It's important to understand what attracts new entrants into the industry, to ensure we maintain a pipeline of

people who will become the future of the sector. Gender pay gap has become an issue within a variety of industries and we thought it would be important to understand how this was reflected in the Healthcare Communications sector.

We have been delighted with the level of response and would like to thank Peter Llewelyn from MedComms Networking for his help in creating and promoting the survey.

There was a huge amount of data created by the research and we have produced this report to summarise the key findings. If there is any specific subject that you would like further details on, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with us.

About the survey

This survey was commissioned by Paramount Recruitment and supported by Medcomms Networking. The survey was developed and managed by a market research company utilizing a leading online survey tool. It was launched in May 2018 and sent by email to all relevant professionals registered with Paramount Recruitment and to members of Medcomms networking. It was also promoted on social media to relevant parties.

646 full responses were received, and the answers have been analysed by a market research company to present the findings in this report.

For further details on the survey, please contact:



Daniel Clifton
Paramount Recruitment Ltd
+44 121 616 3460
medcomms@pararecruit.com



Paramount Recruitment searches the UK, US, Asia, and throughout the EU to find the best talent for the Healthcare Communications sector. We work with clients to fill ad-hoc vacancies and can also work strategically to build whole teams and manage recruitment campaigns or projects.

www.paramountrecruitment.co.uk

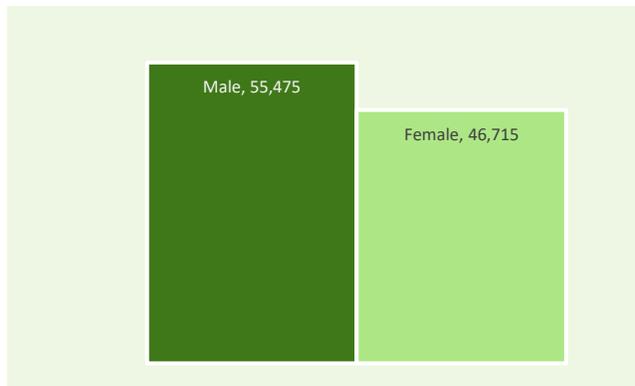
Key findings

London writers have 14% premium

The average basic salary for a medical writer based in London is 14% higher than the overall UK average.

Writers in London earn an average of £41,775, followed by writers in the South East (£40,238), Scotland (£36,700), Midlands (£35,000), North West (£34,433) and South West (£33,217).

[read more](#)



Gender pay gap is 18.75%

The average male salary of £55,475 is 18.75% higher than the average female salary (£46,715).

It is at the Director level where the gender pay gap is high. Male directors have a basic salary of £90,505, which is 32.9% higher than the average female basic salary of £68,078.

[read more](#)

Majority expect pay rise at 5.32%

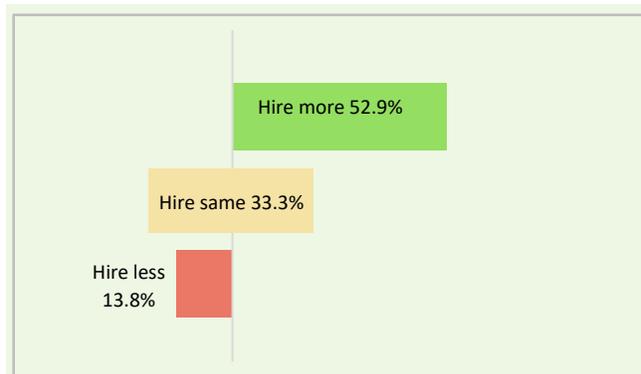
69% of survey responders expect a pay rise this year, although 5.8% believed they would receive this through changing companies. Just 9% did not expect a pay rise and 22% did not know.

Those that expected a pay rise anticipate an average percentage increase of 5.32%.

[read more](#)

Average pay rise expected:

+5.32%



High demand in the next 12 months

Nearly 53% of the survey responders who have responsibility for hiring new employees forecast an increase in hiring over the next 12 months.

Just 14% forecast a decrease in hiring and 33% forecast hiring at the same rate.

[read more](#)

Average basic salaries by role - UK

Healthcare Communications professionals completing the survey provided their basic annual salary. We can then analyse the average salaries (and range of salaries) for each role (where there were sufficient numbers to make analysis viable).

The table below shows the average basic UK salary for each of these roles:

Function	Job title	Low	Average	High
Writing	Associate Medical Writer	23,000	26,753	31,000
	Medical Writer	26,000	33,489	50,000
	Senior Medical Writer	34,500	43,246	63,333
	Principal Medical Writer	37,200	54,920	65,500
	Scientific Team Lead	38,000	55,571	70,000
	Editorial Director	67,000	72,333	80,000
	Scientific Director	49,000	64,776	84,000
Editorial	Editor	31,250	36,417	41,000
	Senior Editor	34,000	39,000	42,000
	Principal Editor	40,000	43,333	48,500
	Editorial Manager	34,275	47,569	63,000
	Managing Editor	45,000	55,000	65,000
Client Services	Account Executive	24,000	26,000	28,000
	Senior Account executive	26,500	28,417	30,000
	Account Manager	26,400	33,734	39,000
	Senior Account Manager	34,000	41,536	52,800
	Account Director	43,000	56,182	78,500
	Senior Account Director	57,000	60,167	70,000
	Associate Director	60,000	61,667	65,000
	Client Services Director	67,000	80,500	85,000

There was a wide variation in basic salaries from the professionals that completed our survey and the above figures show the averages, high and low salaries for each job title.

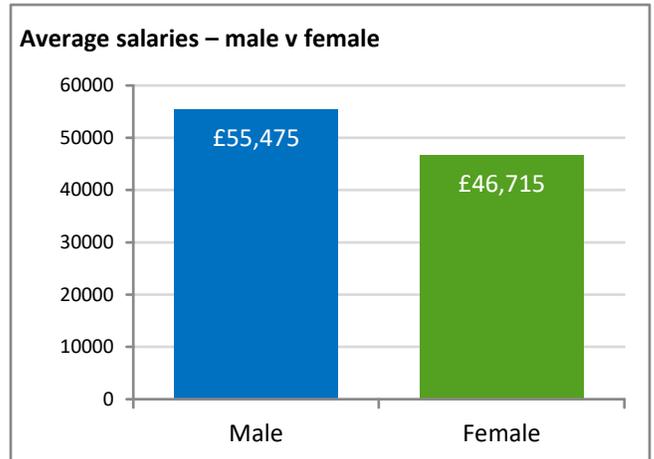
There were a number of other job titles declared by the professionals that completed the survey but we only show those roles for which there was a sufficient number of completers to ensure the average was representative of the market as a whole.

Gender pay gap - UK

73% of the responders to the survey were female and 26% male (1% preferring not to answer).

When the salaries of every completer are analysed by gender, there is a noticeable overall gap between male and female Healthcare communications professionals.

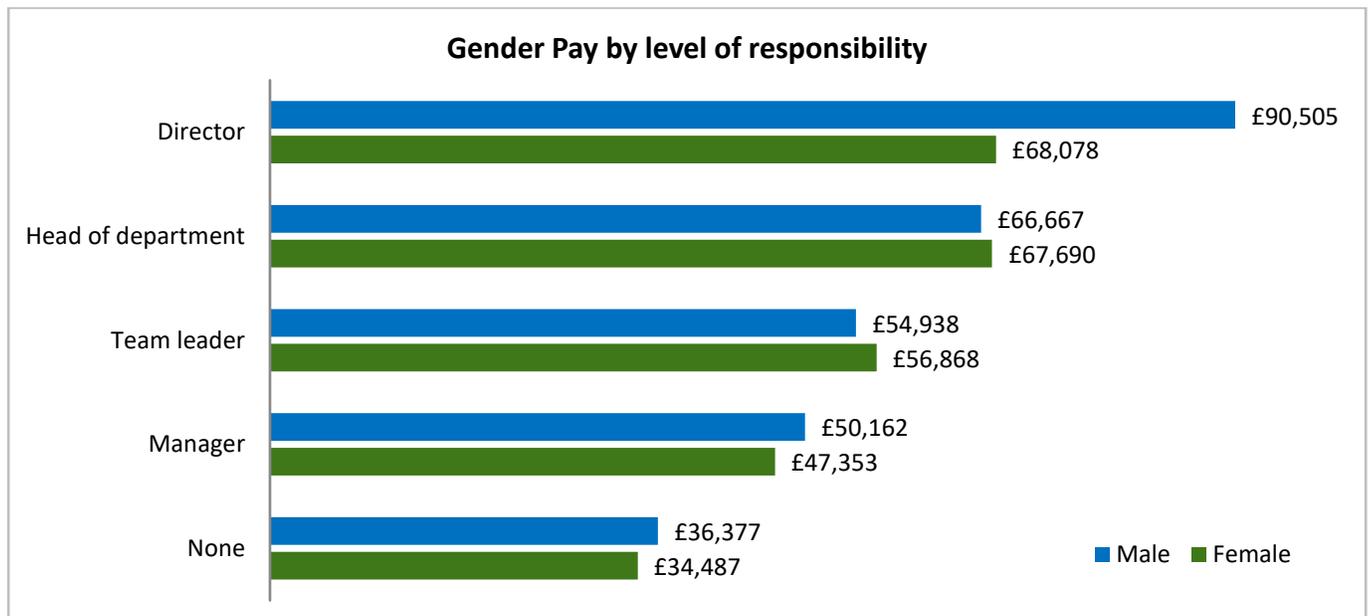
The average UK basic male salary of £55,475 is 18.75% higher than the average female salary (£46,715).



Gender pay gap by seniority

When male and female salaries are further compared by the seniority / level of responsibility of the responder, we can see a very clear pattern. There is a small gap where the responder has no management responsibility – males earning an average of £36,377 which is 5.5% higher than females of the same level of responsibility. There is a similar gap (5.9%) at the lowest management grade while female Team Leaders and Head of departments earn more than males at the same level of seniority.

It is at the Director level where the gender pay gap is high. Male directors have a basic salary of £90,505, which is 32.9% higher than the average female basic salary of £68,078. When we narrow down the “Director” category to cover those individuals working at a full board level, the difference is even clearer. There are a higher number of males at this level (the only time this happens in the whole survey) and Female board Directors earn between £80,000 and £114,000 while male board Director earn between £90,000 and £170,000.

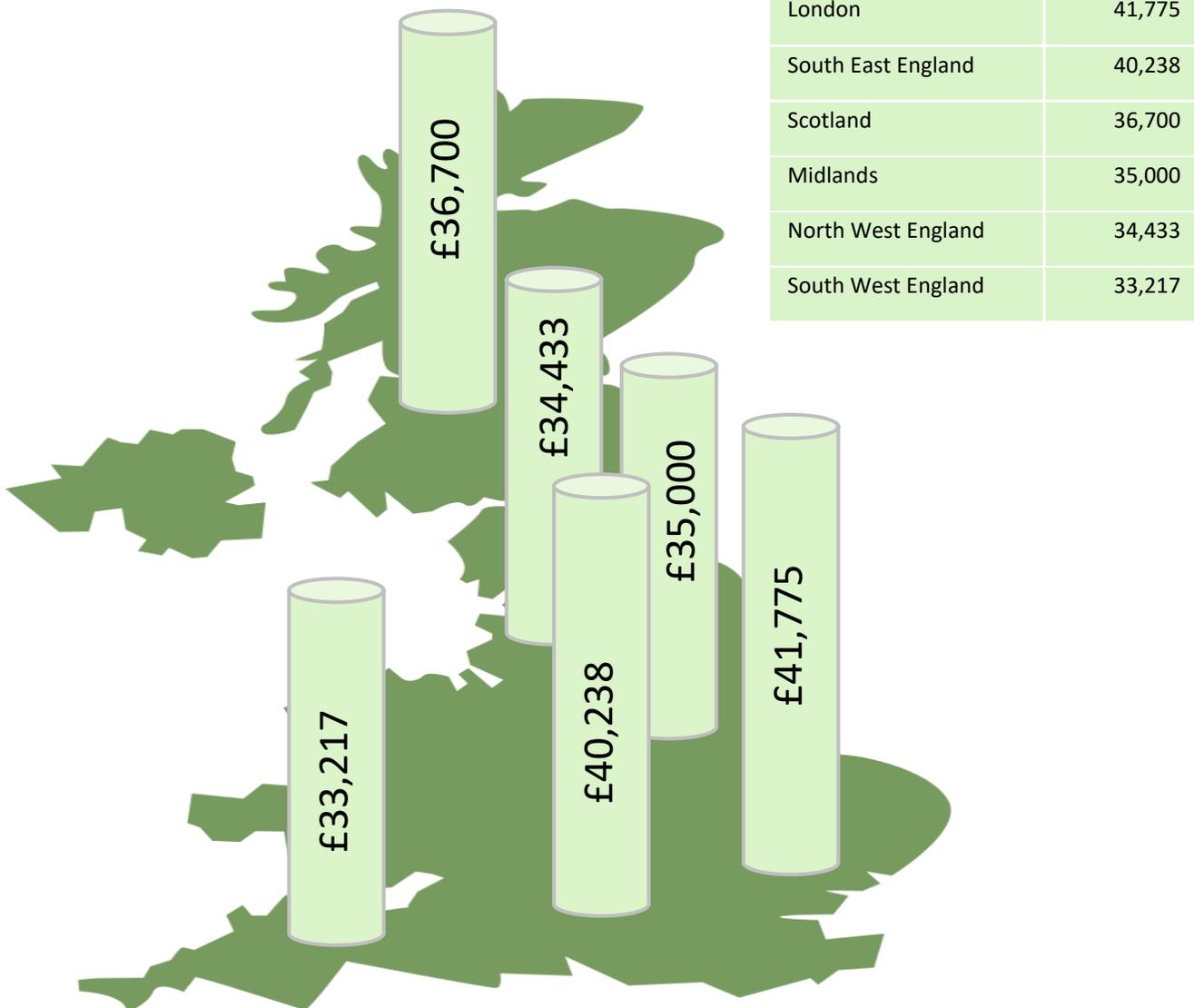


Regional pay variation - UK

We wanted to see whether there is any variation between basic salaries paid in different areas on the United Kingdom. Responders to the survey stated which country they were based in and then, if they worked in the UK, which region of the country they worked in.

The graphic below shows the breakdown of average salaries of Writers (the largest group of similar roles that we could analyse). This shows that writers based in London are paid the highest average base salary (£41,775) and those based in the South West are paid the lowest base salary (£33,217).

Average basic salaries for writers by UK region



Expected pay rises

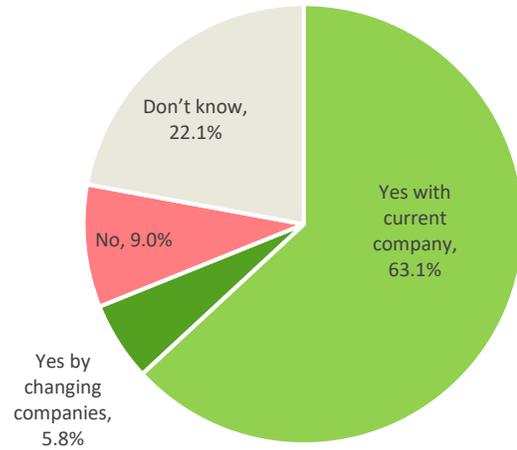
Responders were asked whether they expected a pay rise this year and, if they did, how much they expected to receive. On a global basis, nearly 69% expected a pay rise, although 5.8% believed they would receive this through changing companies. Just 9% did not expect a pay rise and 22% did not know.

Those that expected a pay rise were asked to state the percentage pay rise anticipated. The average pay rise stated by these was 5.32%.

Average pay rise expected:

5.32%

Do you expect to receive a pay rise in the next 12 months?

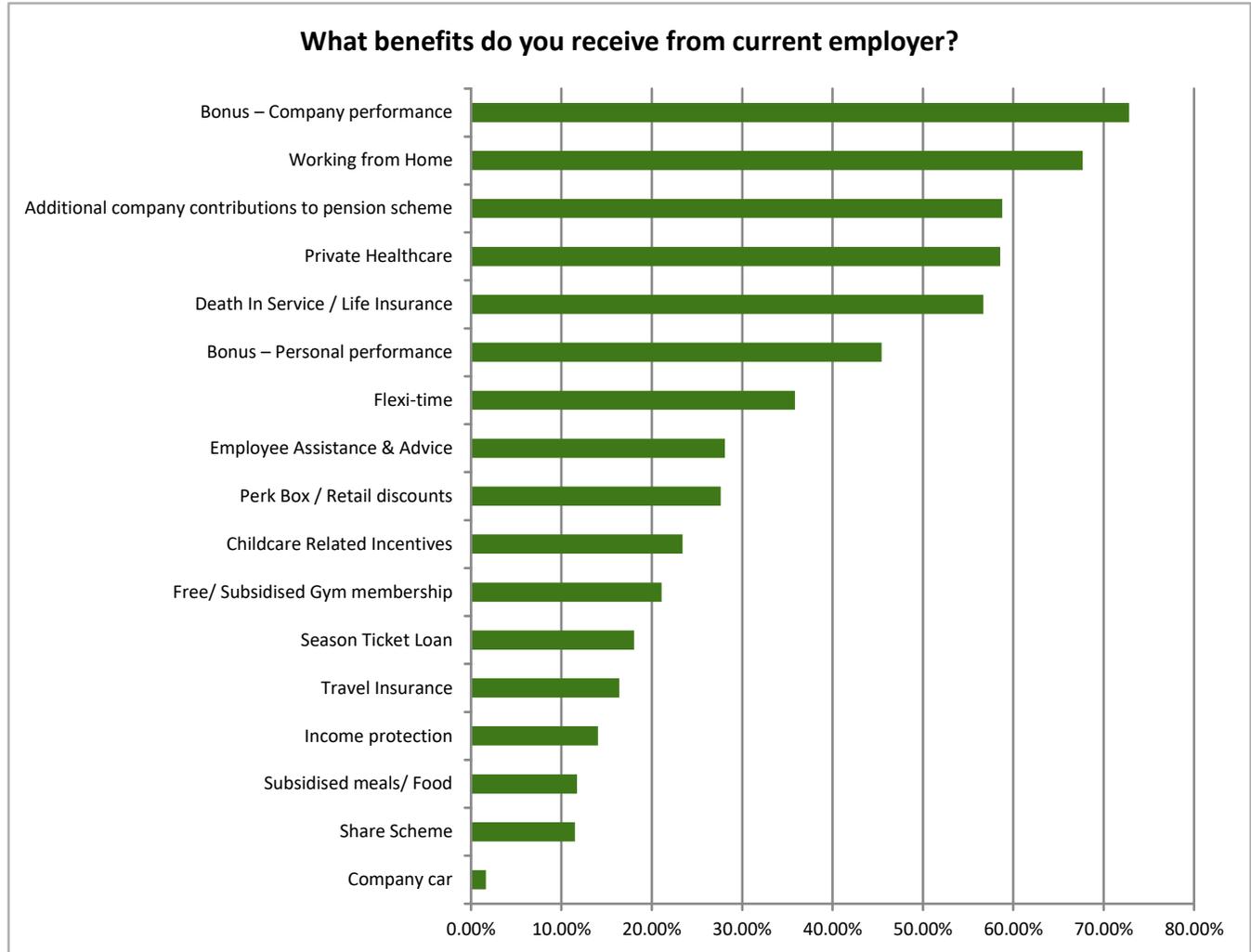


"It is no surprise that the percentage of healthcare comms professionals expecting a pay rise this year is seven times more than those who don't expect a pay-rise. There is a high demand for skills and companies need to reward good performers to keep them happy. Some candidates that we speak to ask for pay rises of 20% or more when looking for a new job. However, many also understand that pay is just one of the important factors for them and they need to ensure that a new position suits their skills, ambitions and work-life priorities too."

Daniel Clifton

Benefits

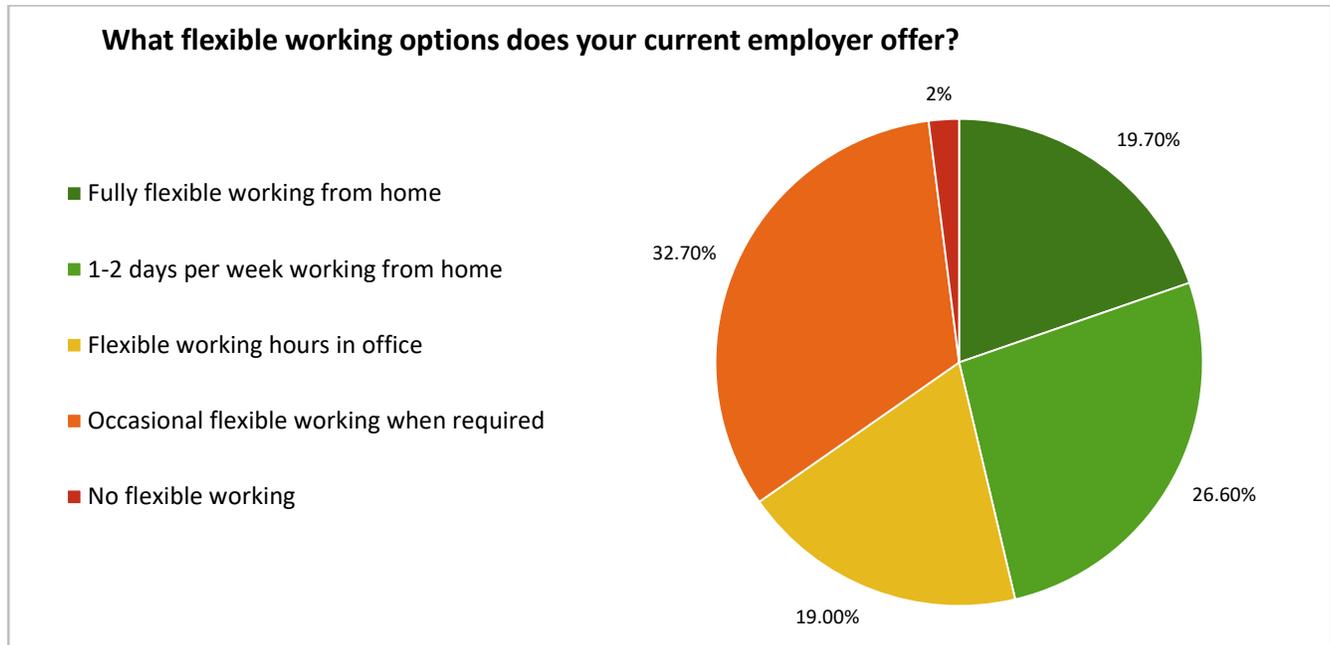
Responders were asked which benefits they received from their current employer. The most common benefit received by 73% of responders was a bonus for company performance followed by the ability to work from home (68%). Just 1.6% received a company car as a benefit.



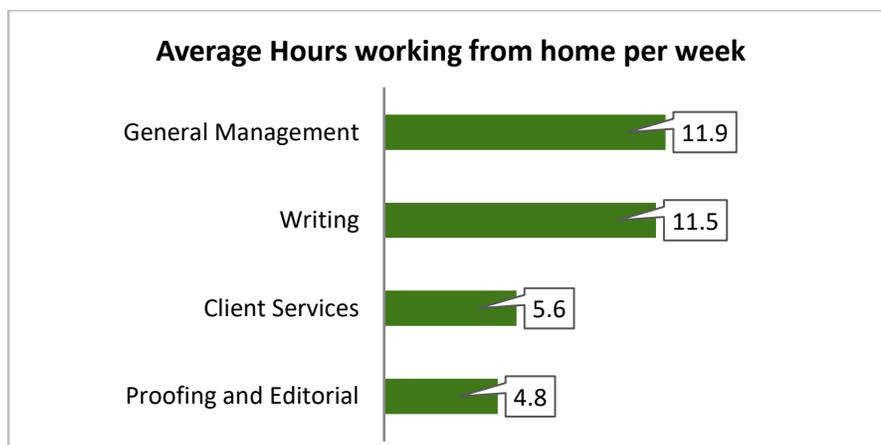
Flexible working

We were keen to understand what types of flexible working were offered within the Healthcare Communications sector and how often professionals worked from home.

We asked those responders that worked in permanent employment what flexible working options their current employer offered. Just 2% had no flexible working options and nearly a fifth had fully flexible working from home. See the breakdown of answers in the chart below:



Responders were asked how many hours a week they worked from home. The average across all responders was 9.4 hours per week. When this is broken down by the job role of each responder we can see that professionals in management work the most hours at home (11.9 hours) while those in proofing/editorial work the least (4.8 hours).



Average hours per week working from home

9.4

Training

Responders in permanent employment were asked how many days training they had received over the last year and the average number of days training received was 4.9 days per year.

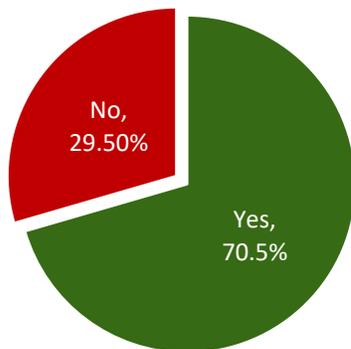
Responders were then asked whether they believed that their employer provided sufficient training for them to develop fully in their role. Just over 70% said yes and just under 30% said no.

Tellingly, there is a significant difference in the average days received by those that said “yes” (6 days) and those that said “no” (2.5 days)

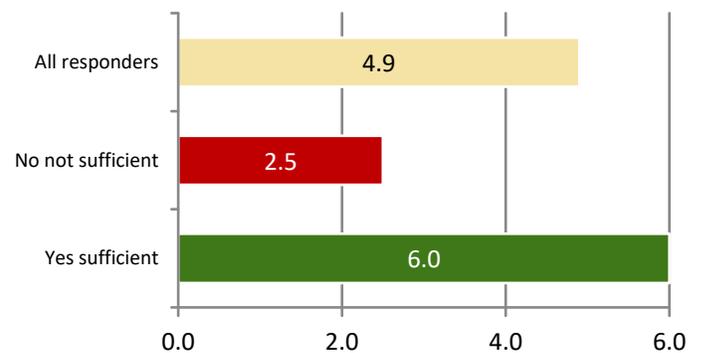
Average number of days training per year.

4.9

Do you feel that your employer provides sufficient training for you to develop fully in your role?



How many days of training have you received in the last year?



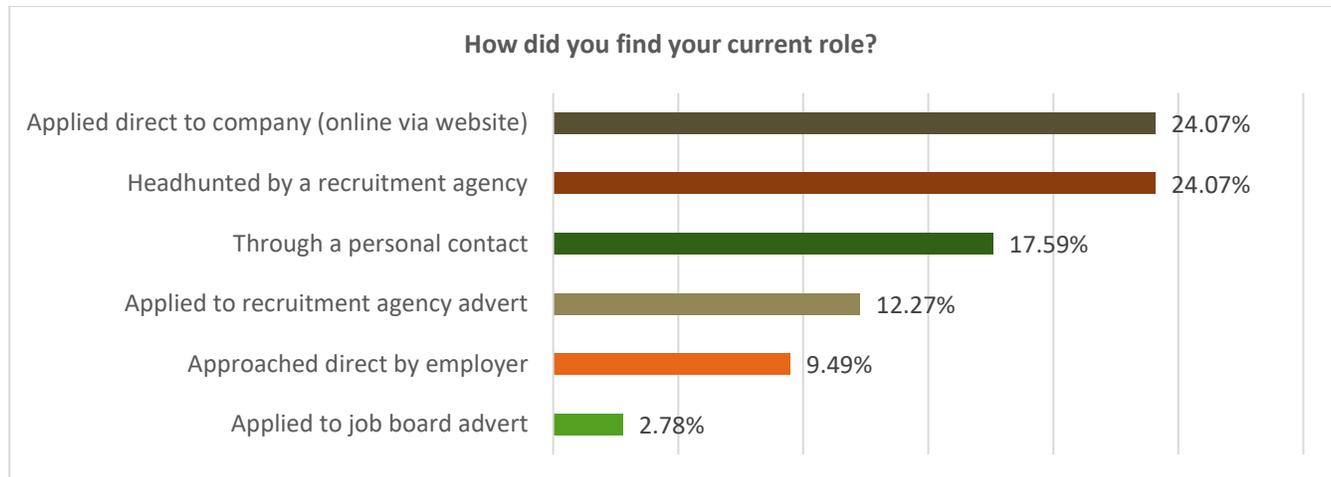
Responders were asked to add what additional training they felt would help them to develop. There were several that wanted training specific to their role (writing, account management) and then there were those that suggested more holistic skills such as team coaching/management and training on industry trends.

Additional training suggestions included:

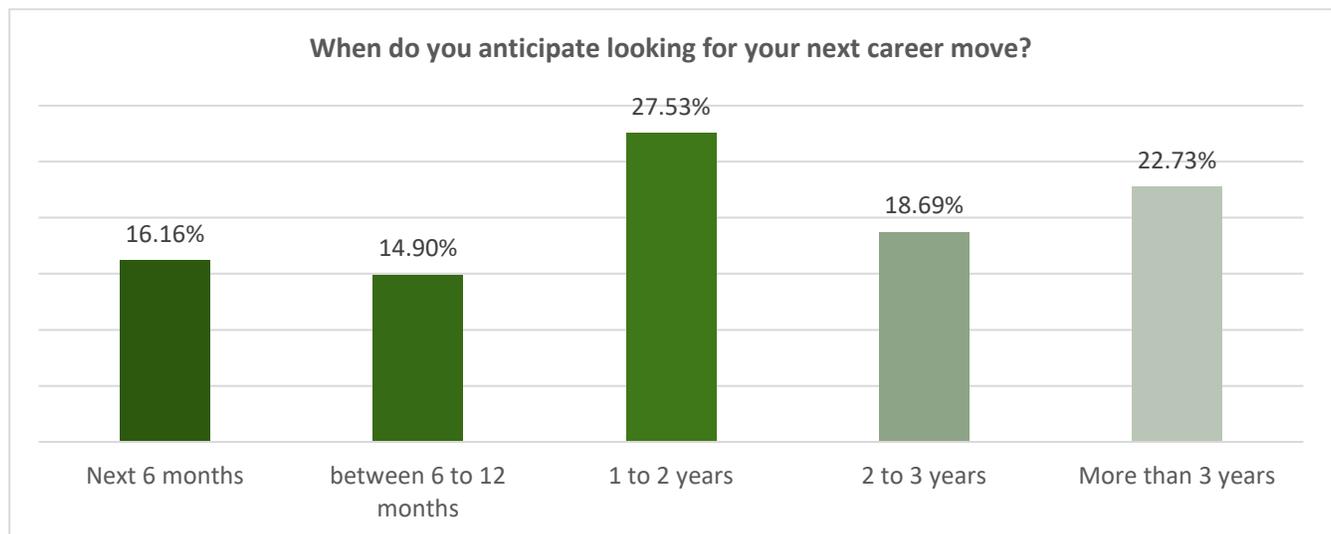
Account Management	Management training
Biostatistics	Management/reviewer training
Business management	Market access-specific training
Client-related information, regulatory compliance	Pharma strategy / guidelines training
Creative copywriting / storytelling courses	Project management, industry trends
Finance Training	Regulatory workshops & writing
Leadership skills, coaching skills	Risk assessment
Leadership, managing a team, strategic thinking	Sponsor writers to attend EMWA workshops
Leadership, Negotiation Skills	Statistical training, therapeutic area training
Line management/how to give feedback to junior staff	Time & resource management training

Job seeking

Responders were asked how they found their current role. Applying direct to their employer and being headhunted by a recruitment agency were the most common routes.



Responders were asked when they anticipated looking for their next career move. More than 30% stated that they anticipated moving within the next year (16% in the next 6 months and 15% between 6 and 12 months). 27.5% anticipate moving within one and 2 years, 19% within 2 and 3 years and 22.7% more than 3 years.



“More than 30% of the survey responders anticipate looking for their next career move within the next year (and nearly 60% within the next two years). This reflects the ambition and importance of career progression for many professionals within the industry. Employers need to have active career management programmes in place so that they can ensure their staff look for their next career move within the organisation. Otherwise they will find their staff moving to their competitors in order to attain the progression that they seek.”

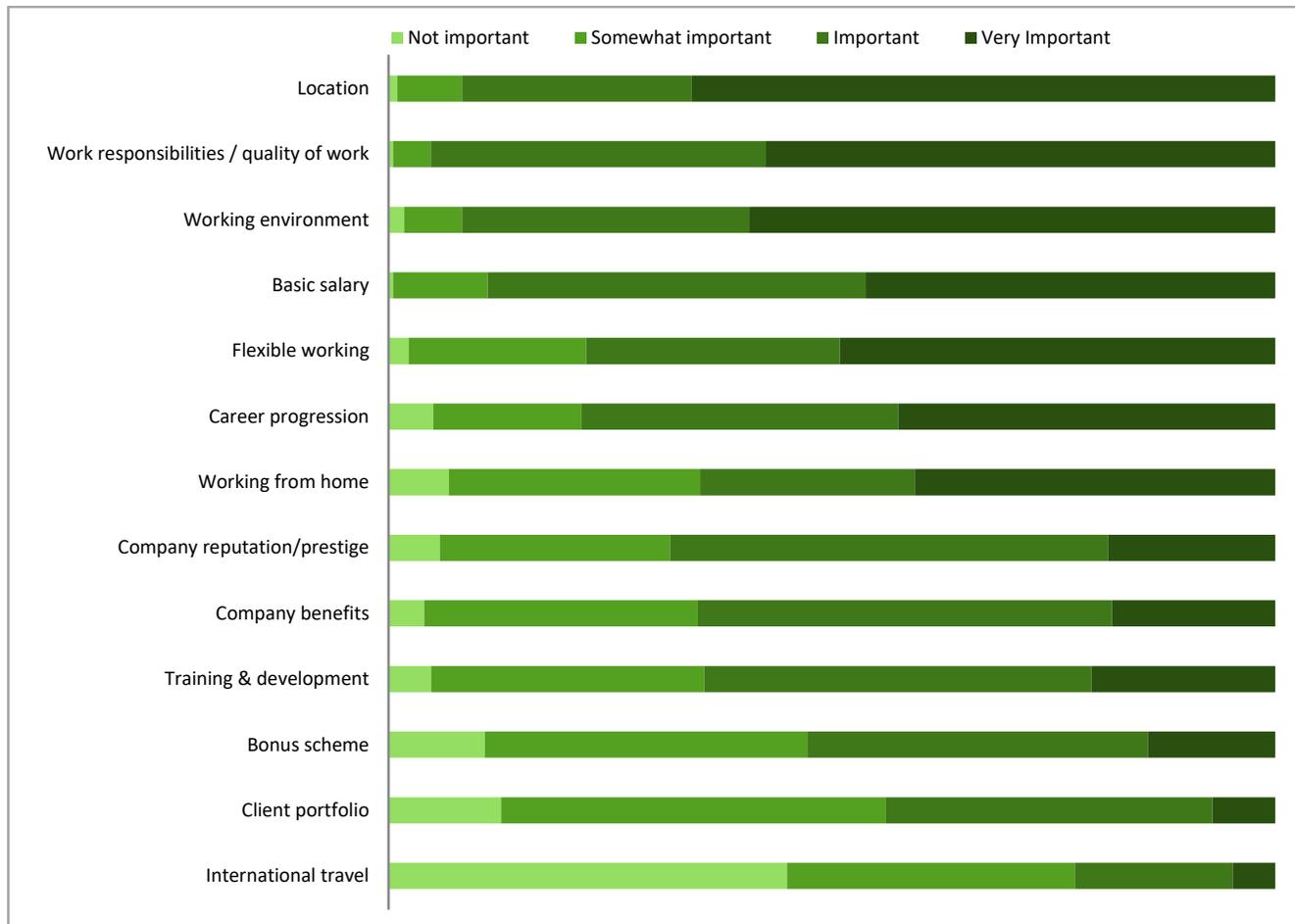
Daniel Clifton

What factors are most important?

The survey asked what factors will be most important when looking for a new position. Responders were shown a list of factors and rated them as not important, somewhat important, important or very important.

Location came out as the most important factor: 66% rating it very important and 26% important.

Work responsibilities came second and then working environment third with basic salary in fourth place and flexible working in fifth.



“The results of the survey demonstrate the importance of employers creating positive working environments where work is interesting, challenging and provides a high level of satisfaction.

For me there is no surprise that location is the most important factor to UK professionals. I regularly talk to candidates who are wary of relocating within the UK because of the costs of moving house and the challenges of organising childcare and education. I am sure that this has led to the progressive levels of flexible working shown in this survey and I encourage all employers to be flexible on location when recruiting staff.”

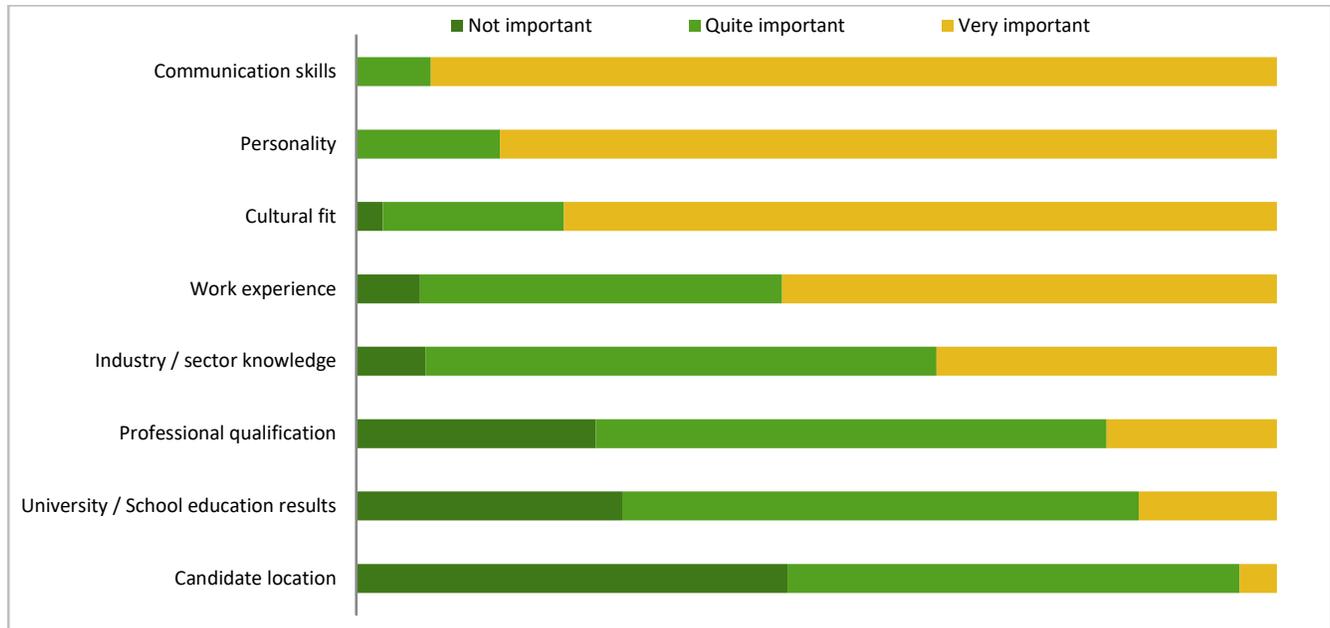
Daniel Clifton

Employer recruitment priorities and plans

If the responder to the survey had responsibility for hiring other employees, they were asked what the important factors are for deciding on which candidate to hire.

Communications skills, personality and cultural fit are the top 3 factors, followed by work experience and sector knowledge. Candidate location was the factor that was least important to employers.

How important are the following factors when deciding which candidate to hire?



Next 12 months hiring plans – hire more, the same or less?

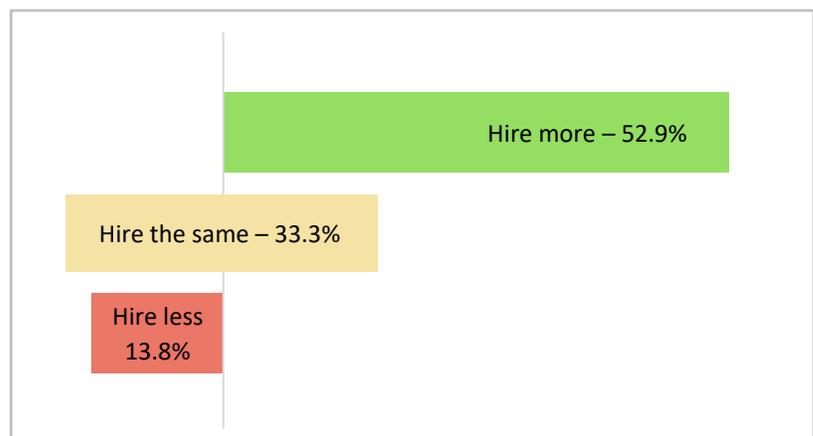
The survey then asked those with hiring responsibility what their company's hiring plans were for the next 12 months.

Of those that gave an opinion:

52.9% will be hiring more staff than last year

33.3% will be hiring the same numbers

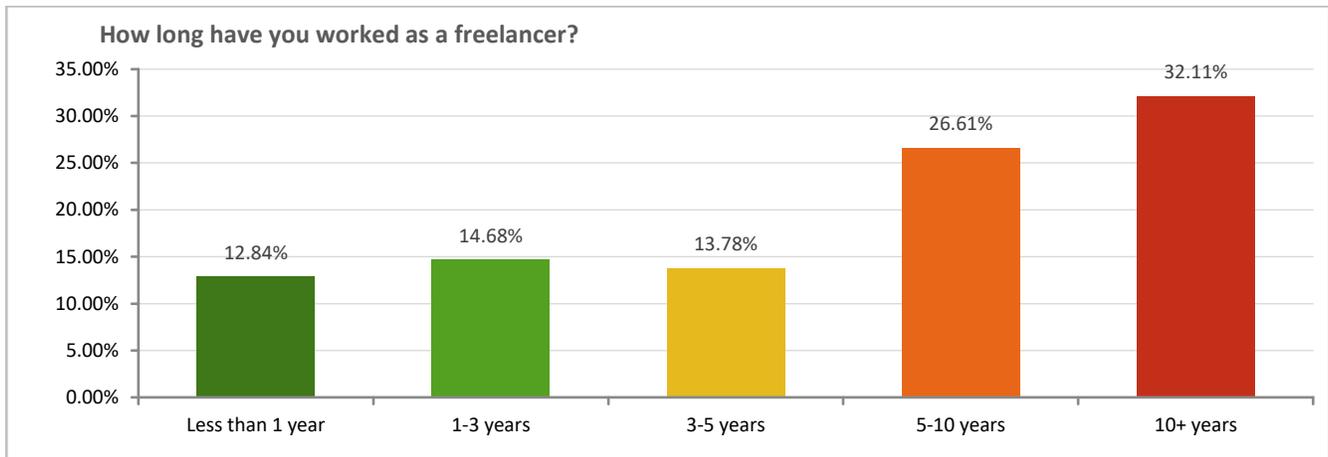
13.8% will be hiring less staff than last year



Freelancers

Nearly 19% of the responders to our survey classed themselves as independent freelance workers.

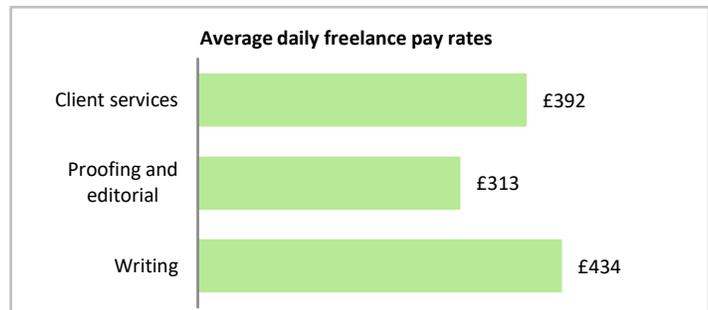
Most of these responders have been working on a freelance basis for more than 5 years, with 32.1% having worked for more than 10 years as a freelancer. 12.84% have been working as a freelancer for less than a year.



The majority of freelancers are paid on an hourly basis with rates varying from £25 per hour to £1000 per day.

Most freelancers work within the writing function and are paid an average of £434 per day, again with a large range of rates.

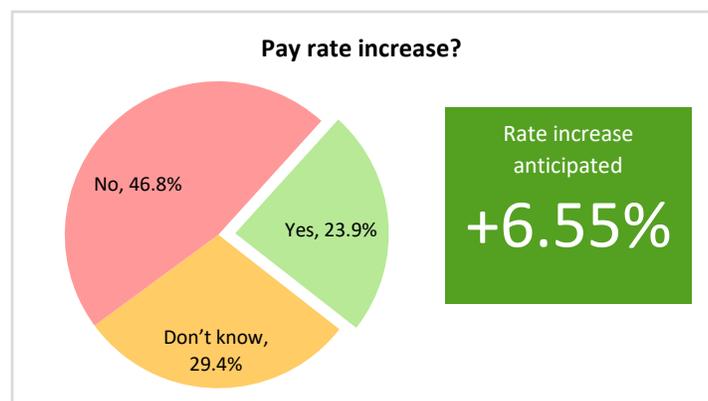
The average pay rates for freelance client service professionals is £392 and freelance proofing / editorial professionals is £313.



Freelancers were asked whether they anticipated increasing their pay rates over the next 12 months.

46.8% said that they did not anticipate an increase, 29.4% did not know whether they would have an increase and just 23.9% said they would increase their rates.

Of those that did anticipate a rate increase, the average percentage rate anticipated is +6.55%.

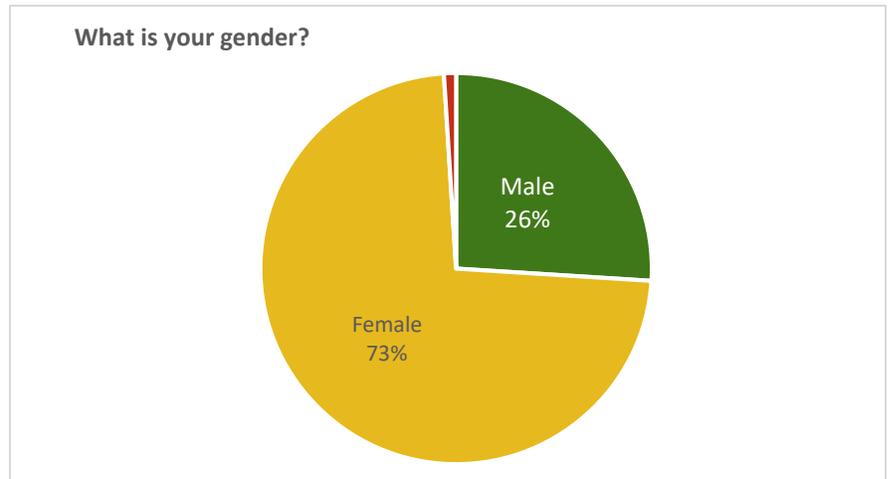


Survey data

The survey was completed by 646 responders working within the healthcare communications sector. This section gives more detail on the survey data

Gender

73% of responders are female, 26% male and 1% preferred not to answer the question.

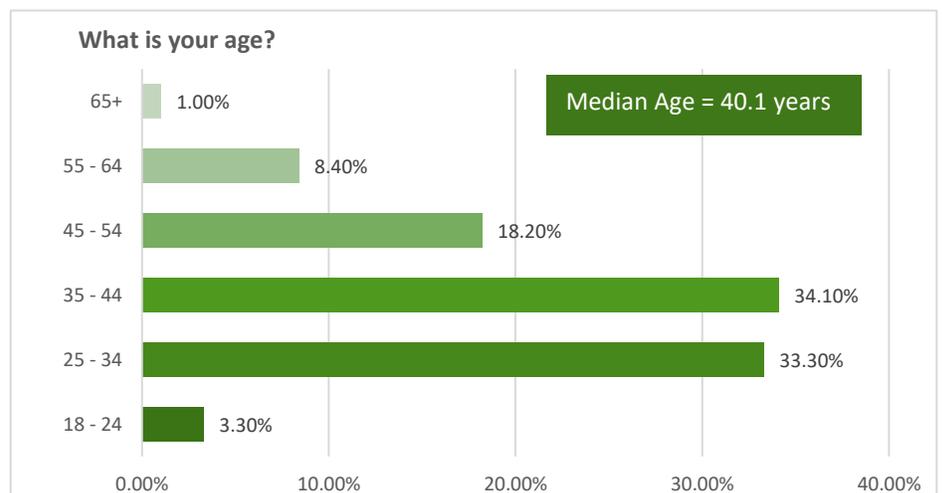


Age

Responders were asked to select their age within the standard age bands used in the majority of workforce surveys.

Just 3.3% were in the 18-24 band, 33.3% in the 25-34 band and 34.1% in the 35-44 band. 18.2% were in the 45-54 band, 8.4% in the 55-64 band and just 1.0% over 65.

The median age for those completing the survey is 40.1 years.

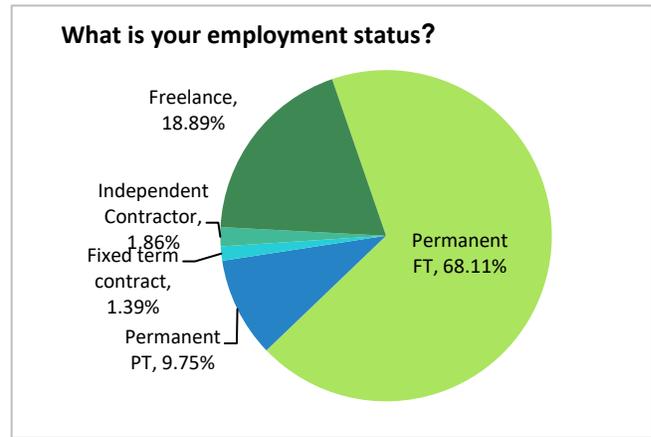


Employment status

Just over 68% of the survey responders work full time in permanent roles with nearly 10% in permanent part time roles.

Just under 19% work on a freelance basis.

Fixed term contracts and independent contractors accounted for 1.4% and 1.9% respectively.

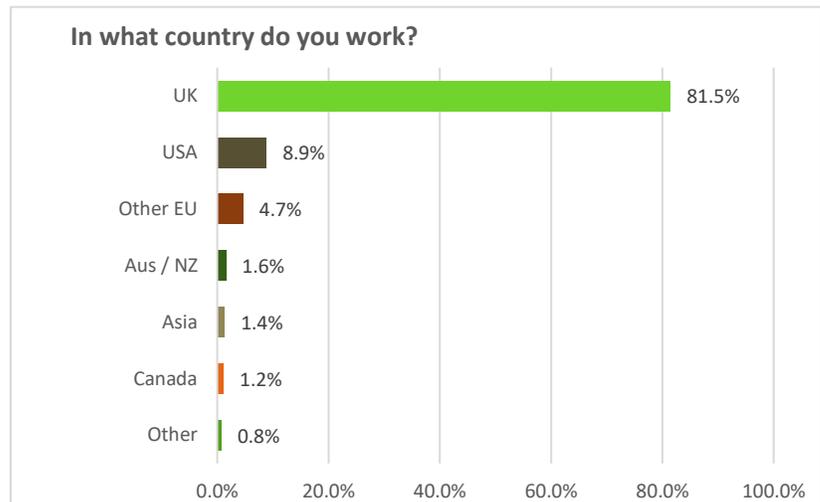


Countries

The vast majority (81.5%) of the survey responders currently work in the UK.

8.9% work in the USA, 4.7% in other EU countries (including Spain, Germany, Italy, France and Belgium).

1.6% work in Australia or New Zealand, 1.4% in countries within Asia and 1.2% in Canada.

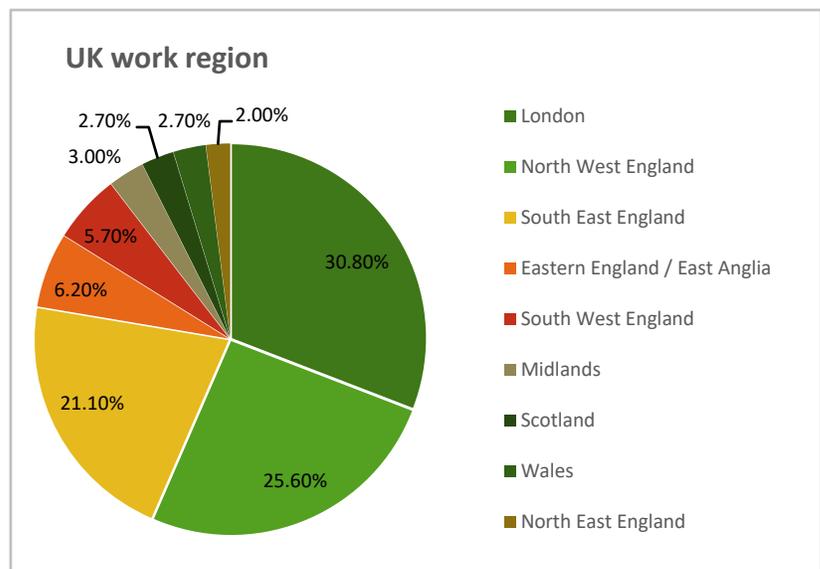


UK region

The responders that worked in the UK are spread throughout the regions although London, North West England and South East England have the highest percentage of workers.

The percentages are as follows:

London	30.8%
North West England	25.6%
South East England	21.1%
Eastern England / East Anglia	6.2%
South West England	5.7%
Midlands	3.0%
Scotland	2.7%
Wales	2.7%
North East England	2.0%

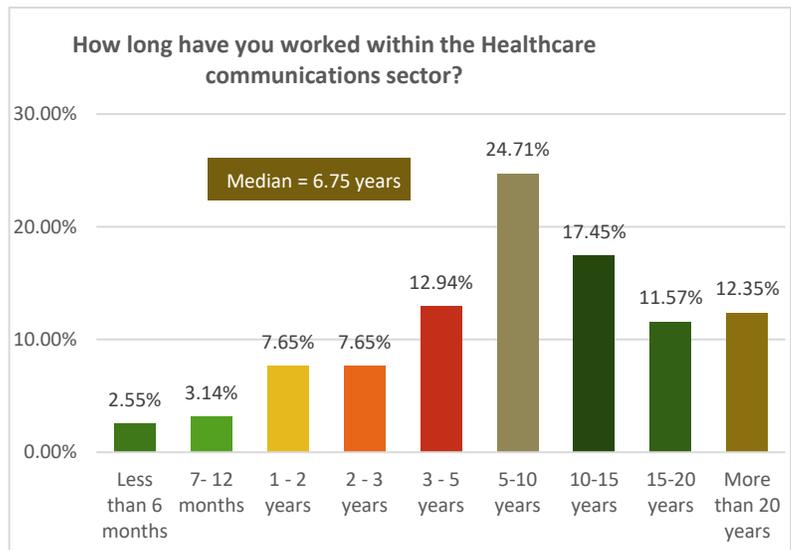


Experience

Over 40% of the responders to the survey have worked within the Healthcare communications sector for more than 10 years.

5.7% have worked for less than a year and 7.65% for between 1 and 2 years and between 2 and 3 years. 12.9% have worked 3-5 years and 24.7% between 5 and 10 years.

The median number of years worked within the industry by our survey responders is 6.75 years.



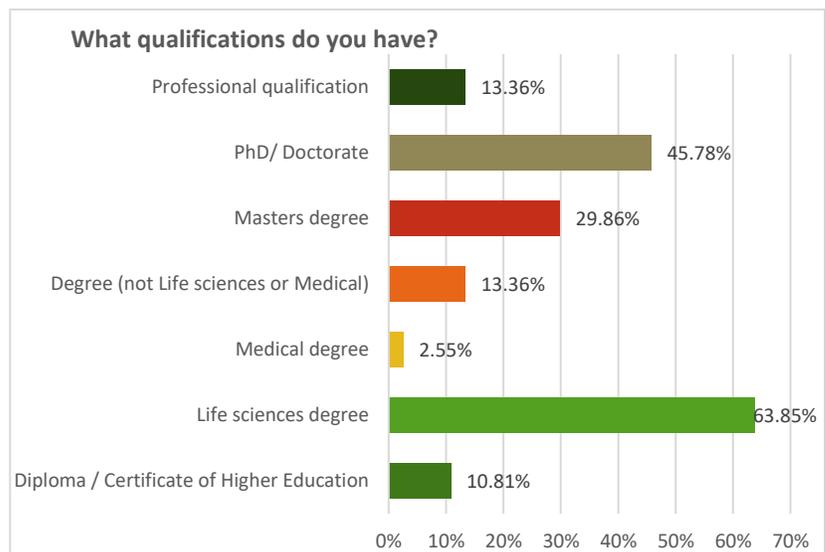
Qualifications

Nearly 46% of the survey responders have a PhD or a Doctorate while nearly 30% have a master's degree.

64% have a life sciences degree, 2.5% have a medical degree and 13% have a degree in a non-life sciences/medical subject.

11% have a diploma or certificate of education.

Just over 13% have a professional qualification – the majority of those holding a CMPP.



Summary & conclusion

The original aim of this survey was to source information so that we could better understand the employment market within the Healthcare Communications industry. It has proved to be a very valuable exercise and has highlighted the following key areas for attention:

Salary variation by region

The average basic salary for a permanent medical writer based in London is 14% higher than the overall UK average and 21% higher than the average salary for a writer based in the North west. Similar trends can be seen for other roles.



Gender pay gap

The average male salary of £55,475 is 18.75% higher than the average female salary (£46,715). It is at the Director level where the gender pay gap is high. Male directors have a basic salary of £90,505, which is 32.9% higher than the average female basic salary of £68,078.



Pay rise of 5.32% anticipated

69% of survey responders expect a pay rise this year, just 9% did not expect a pay rise and 22% did not know. Those that expected a pay rise anticipate an average percentage increase of 5.32%.

+5.32%

Location, responsibilities and environment more important than pay

Location came out as the most important factor for candidates when looking for a new position: 66% rating it very important. Work responsibilities came second and then working environment third with basic salary in fourth place and flexible working in fifth.



Employers want communication skills and personality

Communications skills, personality and cultural fit are the top 3 factors wanted by employers looking to hire candidates, followed by work experience and sector knowledge.



Increased demand for skills from employers

Nearly 53% of the survey responders who have responsibility for hiring new employees forecast an increase in hiring over the next 12 months. Just 14% forecast a decrease in hiring and 33% forecast hiring at the same rate



Paramount Recruitment, Healthcare Communications Team

For more details of the Paramount Recruitment services to employers and candidates, please contact us:



James Luterbacher
Senior principal consultant

+44 (0)121 616 3473
jluterbacher@pararecruit.com



Medical Writing & Client Services UK, EU, ASIA, USA

James has established our services in the US Market and he now covers medical communications, healthcare PR and advertising in the US as well as Europe and Asia.



Jessica Guyon
Senior recruitment consultant

+44 (0)121 616 3462
jguyon@pararecruit.com



Medical Writing & Editing

Jessica has over 8 years healthcare comms experience and partners with a wide range of clients across the North West of England as well as managing a few key accounts



Richard Maxwell
Senior principal consultant

+44 (0)121 616 3474
rmaxwell@pararecruit.com



Client Services

Richard has over 9 years' experience in the sector and his focus is on the client services side of medical communications for the South East region of England.



Sabrina Deo
Lead consultant

+44 (0)121 616 3471
sdeo@pararecruit.com



Digital & Creative, Client Services

Sabrina joined Paramount in February 2015 and specialises in healthcare communications client services, digital and creative roles in the UK.



Alex Carstairs
Specialist consultant

+44 (0)121 616 3479
acarstairs@pararecruit.com



Market Access and HEOR

Alex is a specialist within the Health economic and outcomes research (HEOR) sector covering recruitment across the UK and Europe.



Paramount
Recruitment

We bring ambition to life sciences

Paramount Recruitment Ltd

+44 121 616 3460

www.paramountrecruitment.co.uk