FOSTER & MAY

MARKET REPORT
Q2 2025

I've been helping professional construction consultancies across London and the Southeast hire white-collar professionals for over eight years. Since 2023, I've also been producing reports on key statistics, trends, and insights within the construction consultancy recruitment market.

In this report, I'll be sharing updated salary insights for Quantity Surveyors, Building Surveyors, and Project Managers — along with international market updates (building on what we touched on last quarter) and my latest analysis of the QS recruitment landscape.

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SALARY INSIGHT

Over the last six months, Foster & May has given me the platform to support a broader range of construction consultancy roles. This has given me deeper insight into current salary expectations across multiple disciplines - including professionals you may be looking to hire.

So far this year, we've supported hiring across the following roles:

- Quantity Surveyors
- Building Surveyors
- Project Managers
- Accountants and Bookkeepers
- Project Co-ordinators
- Principal Designer/CDM Consultants
- Fire Engineers
- Structural Engineer
- Sustainability Consultants
- Health & Safety Consultants
- Facilities Managers

Quantity Surveyors – Average Salary Requirements

Level	Average Salary Requirement
Graduate	£27,563
Assistant	£37,340
Quantity Surveyor	£52,370
Senior	£71,690
Associate	£85,834
Director	£105,000

Project Managers - Average Salary Requirements

Level	Average Salary Requirement
Graduate	£28,000
Assistant	£39,833
Project Manager	£56,000
Senior	£71,250
Associate	£86,667

Building Surveyors - Average Salary Requirements

Level	Average Salary Requirement
Graduate	£30,400
Assistant	£35,667
Building Surveyor	£44,000
Senior	£63,750
Associate	£80,000

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SALARY: BUILDING SURVEYORS VS QUANTITY SURVEYORS

Despite only directly supporting Building Surveyors for the past six months, I have spent the last eight years working closely with recruitment consultants who specialise in this field. Throughout that time, it was commonly stated - and supported by salary data - that Building Surveyors typically earn less than Quantity Surveyors.

Average Salary Requirements

Level	Building Surveyors	Quantity Surveyors
Graduate	£30,400	£27,563
Assistant	£35,667	£37,340
Surveyor	£44,000	£52,370
Senior	£63,750	£71,690
Associate	£80,000	£85,834

However, over the past six months, I have spoken with many Building Surveyors whose salary expectations have exceeded the so-called "market average" and aligned more closely with their Quantity Surveyor counterparts. Importantly, these Building Surveyors have received multiple interview invitations, job offers, and have successfully secured new roles.

So, what can we infer from this?

- It's possible that Quantity Surveyors are generally more aware of their market value and, as a result, are more confident in demanding higher salaries.
- It may also be that a greater number of larger practices employ Quantity Surveyors and are willing to pay above market rates to secure talent. This may cause smaller firms to increase their own salaries to remain competitive.
- However, one key difference stands out: a significantly higher percentage of employers are unwilling to consider someone a "Building Surveyor" unless they hold MRICS status. This level of rigidity is far less common in the QS profession.

I suspect this expectation—that a Building Surveyor must be chartered before progressing—has existed for some time. If so, it may deter many aspiring surveyors from making career moves, as such moves are often seen as lateral (e.g., retaining the same job title like "Assistant Building Surveyor" with only marginal salary improvements). By contrast, Quantity Surveyors can progress from graduate roles to full QS positions - and command significantly higher salaries - without necessarily having started their APC.

Why am I highlighting this?

If you're struggling to attract talented, APC-level Building Surveyors, consider breaking from the norm. Offer job titles your competitors don't. Pay slightly above the average. And when you succeed, don't be surprised if the rest of the market starts to follow your lead.

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THE INTERNATIONAL MARKET

In my last report, I highlighted the growing trend of Quantity Surveyors and Project Managers seeking roles abroad, particularly in the Middle East and the United States. The good news for UK-based Construction Consultancies is that this trend appears to have slowed—significantly, in fact. Conversations with professionals already based in the Middle East, as well as those attempting to relocate, suggest that demand has dropped. This is largely due to projects being placed on hold and possible over-hiring during the past 12–18 months—something we've seen before.

While internal transfers within multinational firms are still taking place, there now seems to be a stronger focus on hiring talent within the UK rather than abroad.

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FINAL THOUGHTS

A new name for everything Building Surveying

As I return to primarily supporting Quantity Surveyors, I'm pleased to announce that Foster & May has welcomed Tom Harrison to the team. Tom has extensive experience working alongside construction consultancies and will now lead our Building Surveying recruitment across the UK, with a particular focus on the Southeast.

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The QS Market

I can only share what I hear directly from those active in the QS consultancy market – and while some firms are still waiting on projects to kick off or client decisions to land (messages we hear most years), QS recruitment appears to be very active.

In fact, from the conversations I've had, a large portion of the industry is proactively – and in some cases aggressively – hiring. Those that aren't are often firms that have recently onboarded multiple new team members and are now focused on helping them settle in.

Overall, there's confidence in the market – with a sensible layer of caution beneath it. And that feels like a healthy place to be.

Daniel Foster
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