Market Report Q2 2026

For over nine years, Daniel has supported professional construction and property consultancies in hiring Quantity Surveyors across the UK, primarily throughout London and the Southeast. Since 2023, he has also published quarterly reports focusing on key statistics, trends, and insights within the construction consultancy recruitment market.

Having expanded the Foster & May team in April 2026, Daniel and the team have been able to take a deeper dive into Quantity Surveying salaries across the UK. As a result, we will compare salary data for various locations across the UK. We will also highlight some key topics of conversation that have arisen during Q2.

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Regional Salary Comparison – Quantity Surveying

As Foster & May continues to expand, we are supporting Quantity Surveyors across a wider range of locations throughout the UK. This broader reach has enabled us to collect a larger and more representative salary dataset, providing a clearer view of regional pay trends across the profession.

The figures below compare midpoint salaries for key Quantity Surveying roles across three UK regions. They highlight regional salary differences and identify where pay premiums remain strongest.

Level	London Midpoint (£)	North Midpoint (£)	Midlands Midpoint (£)	London Premium vs North	London Premium vs Midlands
Graduate	27,500	26,500	27,500	3.80%	0%
Assistant	37,500	33,500	33,000	11,90%	13.60%
QS	55,000	51,500	47,500	6.80%	15.80%
Senior	70,000	65,000	65,000	7.70%	6.90%

Regional salary differences are relatively small at Graduate level but increase at Assistant and Project QS level. London continues to offer a salary premium of around 15–16% for mid-level Quantity Surveyors, likely driven by a stronger demand, and higher living costs.

At Senior level, regional salary differences narrow again, reflecting increasingly competitive salaries outside London to attract experienced professionals. Graduate salaries remain broadly consistent across all regions, demonstrating the industry's continued investment in attracting new talent.

Salary Expectations

The figures below illustrate the salary expectations of Quantity Surveyors we have supported throughout 2026, and the typical salary ranges sought across the Professional Quantity Surveying (PQS) sector.

	London & Southeast			Midlands & Southwest			Northwest & Northeast		
Level	**Low (£)**	**High (£)**	**Midpoint (£)**	**Low (£)**	**High (£)**	**Midpoint (£)**	**Low (£)**	**High (£)**	**Midpoint (£)**
Trainee	22,000	26,000	24,000						
Graduate	25,000	30,000	27,500	25,000	30,000	27,500	25,000	28,000	26,500
Assistant	28,000	47,000	37,500	32,000	34,000	33,000	27,000	40,000	33,500
QS	40,000	70,000	55,000	35,000	60,000	47,500	45,000	58,000	51,500
Senior	60,000	80,000	70,000	60,000	71,000	65,000	60,000	70,000	65,000
Associate	75,000	102,000	88,500						
Director	100,000	125,000	112,500						

The market continues to follow a traditional pyramid structure, with far more Graduate and Assistant Quantity Surveyors seeking new opportunities than experienced professionals at senior levels. Associate and Director vacancies remain limited due to the smaller number of leadership roles within consultancies.

Many firms are also cautious about hiring externally into senior positions, as higher salary expectations and the potential disruption to internal succession plans can make these appointments less attractive.

As a result, the greatest shortage remains at Quantity Surveyor and Senior Quantity Surveyor level. These professionals have the experience to lead projects and manage clients but have not yet moved into leadership roles, making them some of the most sought-after candidates in the PQS market. This ongoing supply shortage continues to drive salary growth at QS and SQS level.

The Recruitment Rollercoaster

Throughout the year, consultancy practices of all sizes have repeatedly asked us the same question: "*Is anyone actually hiring?*" The answer has consistently been yes.

We wouldn't have grown our business if demand wasn't there.

However, the Quantity Surveying recruitment market often resembles a rollercoaster. Certain firms embark on significant recruitment drives before becoming quiet, while others that have been inactive suddenly begin hiring. When one large consultancy slows down, we often see several SMEs and regional practices each recruiting one or two key hires.

As a result, the market can appear either busy or quiet depending on where you're sitting. From our perspective, the market has remained consistently active throughout 2026, with demand simply shifting between different types of employers rather than disappearing altogether.

London vs the Rest of the UK

As Foster & May has expanded nationally, we've gained valuable insight into Quantity Surveying recruitment outside London and the Southeast.

Key Observations

- **Graduate opportunities remain challenging.** Good graduates, both with and without experience, are finding it slightly harder to secure opportunities, as most consultancies outside of the Southeast prioritise experienced hires. Whereas in London, there tends to be a bit more openness to building from the ground up and investing in those less experienced.

- **Location, location, location.** In the Southeast, most Quantity Surveyors can access London and its surrounding opportunities relatively easily. Across the rest of the UK, however, there is often no obvious or convenient route to a major city. This has a direct impact on hiring, further restricting what is already a limited talent pool in many regions.

- **Greater flexibility from employers.** In response to these talent shortages, we've seen a number of PQS practices across South Wales, the North West and the North East become increasingly open-minded regarding candidate backgrounds. This includes considering Senior Quantity Surveyors from infrastructure rather than real estate and the built environment, as well as candidates from developer and contractor backgrounds where previously only consultancy experience may have been considered.

Concluding Thoughts

As we enter Q3 and the summer months, it will be interesting to see whether more consultancies open up to taking on graduates looking to kick-start their careers, after the larger practices have once again secured the majority of newly qualified Graduates.

As the new team members at Foster & May embed themselves into their respective markets, we look forward to seeing how salary expectations and the wider QS recruitment landscape continue to develop.

Daniel Foster

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If you are looking to hire a Quantity Surveyor anywhere in the UK, please don't hesitate to contact us:

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