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Consulting

RecOps Consulting Presents:



# 2024 OPS IN RECRUITMENT SALARY & PACKAGE BENCHMARKING

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# The Recruitment Landscape in 2024.

The recruitment sector in 2024 has faced a challenging yet transformative year, marked by macroeconomic pressures, shifts in hiring priorities, and continued adaptation to post-pandemic workforce trends. Despite economic uncertainty, the sector demonstrated resilience, driven by demand in high-growth industries and the sector's ability to dynamically adapt to ever-changing circumstances.

However, ongoing challenges, such as rising costs, skill shortages, and inflationary pressures, have shaped salaries, bonuses, and employment trends for operations professionals.

Given the economic pressures, there has been a notable shift in recruitment businesses tightening their belts and focusing on streamlining and improving business efficiency.

This has come as a double-edged sword for Ops professionals. Now more than ever, recruitment businesses are leaning on their Ops function to improve and optimise processes, however, we have seen a significant trend in redundancies at senior levels (particularly Ops Director and COO) in an effort to streamline budgets through restructuring programmes.

# The Outlook for 2025.

The outlook for the recruitment sector in 2025 is cautiously optimistic.

While the sector remains resilient, economic uncertainty continues to influence hiring trends, prompting many businesses to prioritise leaner operations and measurable ROI.

Ops professionals are in a positive position as businesses are focusing on efficiency and innovation, with a growing emphasis on technology adoption and process optimisation.

However, this optimism is tempered by a cautious approach to hiring and compensation, as companies navigate global economic instability.

This report highlights critical benchmarks for salaries, bonuses, and benefits, offering insights for businesses to attract and retain top operational talent in 2025 and beyond.

## Optimising Ops in 2025

### Key skills to develop as an Operations professional

- Automation & CRM First Strategy
- Data Analysis
- Strategic Decision Making
- Change Management
- Financial Acumen
- Compliance & Risk Management





# Salary Benchmarking Overview

## COO

**Average:** £108k

**Range:** £100-£120k

**Factors:** Tend to only be present in businesses with 100+ headcount, relatively consistent across geographic locations & model types.

## Operations Director

**Average:** £80k

**Range:** £65-£100k

**Factors:** Salary directly correlates to business size, average for <50 headcount is £75k, whilst 50+ is £90k.

Search firm salaries on average 30% higher than contingent/interim/temp. Consistent across geographic location.

## Head of Operations

**Average:** £55k

**Range:** £35-£80k

**Factors:** Salary directly correlates to business size, average for <50 headcount is £50k, whilst 50+ is £75k.

Relatively consistent across geographic locations & model types.

## Operations Manager

**Average:** £47k

**Range:** £24-£70k

**Factors:** Salary directly correlates to business size, average for <50 headcount is £43k, whilst 50+ is £68k.

Salaries 27% higher in London, and 16% higher in Search firms.



## Operations Exec/Admin

**Average:** £35k

**Range:** £25-£40k

**Factors:** Salary directly correlates to business size, average for <50 headcount is £31k, whilst 50+ is £38k.

Salaries 48% higher in London, and 18% higher in Search firms.





# Salary Benchmarking Analysis

The number one factor that affects your salary in 2024 is company size. As to be expected the larger the business, the higher the salary, particularly at the mid-senior level (Ops Manager & Head of Ops). This is likely to be down to the complexities of the businesses at this size, increased revenues and increased scope of strategic duties.

Naturally, the smaller businesses have tighter budget priorities, and often have operations in a standalone role, removing the need for managerial and more strategic duties.

Geographic location only really has an impact at the lower end of the scale, which is reflective of rising living costs.

It's worth pointing out that we see a huge amount of variance in the packages for 'Operations Manager'. This is because this role can vary massively and have numerous definitions. The salary bandings here will not only be dependant on company size but also complexity of the role, qualifications and experience. Someone managing a multi-functional team will be on a higher set of bandings to someone in a standalone role operating in more of a administrative capacity.

Contingent recruitment firms have the lowest of the salary averages across the varying job roles, with Temp/SoW consistently 6% higher, and Retained/Search firms 14% higher. Again, this is likely to be down to the increased complexity of these business types.

# Bonus Benchmarking Overview

## COO

Most Common Structure: % of Salary  
Amount: 20%

## Operations Director

Most Common Structure: % of Salary  
Amount: 17.5%

## Head of Operations

Most Common Structure: % of Salary  
Amount: 12%

## Operations Manager

Most Common Structure: Fixed  
Amount: £5,000

## Operations Exec/Admin

Most Common Structure: % of Salary  
Amount: 12%

## Bonus Structure

### Companies offering a bonus

- 73%

### Structures

- % of salary (54%)
- Fixed (18%)
- Discretionary (16%)
- % of Profit (12%)

### % of Salary

- Average: 13.7%
- Range: 5-25%

### Fixed

- Average: £4,500
- Range: £1-10k

### % of Profit

- Average: 1.5%
- Range: 1-2%

### Payout Schedule

- Annual - 36%
- Quarterly - 32%
- Half Yearly - 26%

### Objectives

- Mixed Personal & Business - 70%
- Personal Only - 15%
- Business Performance Only - 15%





## Bonus Benchmarking Analysis

Bonus packages increase with seniority with the highest levels at Ops Director and COO. Whilst still most likely to be on a ‘% of salary’ (17.5-20%), this is also the level that we see bonus structures as ‘% of profit’ reflecting the more strategic and commercially focused remit of people at this level.

Interestingly, we actually see higher bonus levels for smaller businesses (<30 headcount) at roles below Ops Director (17.5% of salary). This is an effective way of increasing the overall packages to be able to secure and retain key talent (given the lower average salaries) but directly tie staffing costs payouts to performance, rather than committing to higher operating costs.

Again, we see Retained/Search firms topping the group with average ‘% of salary’ payouts at 14%, vs Contingency at 13.5% and Temp/SoW at 12%. This added to the increased salaries takes the overall variance to 16% on packages.

It is worth noting that the number of businesses offering a bonus structure has dropped slightly in 2024 from 79% to 73%, perhaps reflecting the year of uncertainty and turbulence.





# Benefits Benchmarking Overview

## Pensions

### Enhanced Pension Offered

- No - 77%
- Yes - 23%

### Package (if offered)

- 2% Employer contribution top up (to 10% overall)

## Professional Development Budget

### Offered

- When Asked For - 51%
- No - 37%
- Yes - 12%

## Additional Benefits

- Healthcare - 70%
- Office Amenities - 61%
- Wellbeing Benefits - 48%
- Cycle-to-work Scheme - 46%
- Gym Membership - 32%
- Mobile - 32%
- Retail Discount - 13%
- Car Leasing - 10%
- Tech Allowance - 6%
- Financial Education - 4%
- Additional Holiday - 2%



## Incentives

### Is there Ops/Non-Sales Incentives Budget?

- No - 87%
- Yes - 13%

### Are Ops included in Company-wide Incentives

- Yes - 74%
- No - 16%
- N/A - no company-wide incentives - 10%

### Package (if offered)

- £45-100ph
- Discretionary budgets for breakfasts, lunches, vouchers, etc.

### Are Ops included in Sales Incentives

- Yes - 62%
- No - 23%
- N/A - no sales incentives - 15%



## Benefits & Incentives Benchmarking Analysis

When it comes to benefits and incentives, this appears to be individual preference across businesses, with little to no effect of business size, location, model, etc. (bar <10 headcount for obvious budgetary reasons).

What is positive to see is a huge shift in professional development support for Ops professionals, with 63% having a defined budget, or budget when requested.



## **Upskill with Recruitment Ops Mentoring**

Recruitment Ops Mentoring was created to fix common problems experienced by all operational professionals within the recruitment sector.

Often we are working in standalone roles, being managed by non-operational professionals or carving the path out for ourselves. The common thing I hear when discussing professional development with my Ops network is 'I don't know what I don't know'.

Recruitment Ops Mentoring offers a variety of group training workshops, 121 mentoring and career coaching for anyone working in a non-sales role.

Recruitment businesses will be evolving their operations significantly over the next decade, and it's important that we can support that journey. From tech-stack optimisation, to change management, people and performance to streamlining budgets, enhancing your professional repertoire has never been more essential.

Check out the website for details on the programme and upcoming workshops!

[www.recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk](http://www.recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk)





## Contact



**Email**

: [natasha@recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk](mailto:natasha@recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk)



**Website**

: [www.recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk](http://www.recruitmentopsmentoring.co.uk)



**Phone**

: +44 (0) 77469 40153