

# United Kingdom Salary Benchmarking Report 2021



## GxP Quality Assurance Pharmaceutical & Biopharmaceutical

# Quality Assurance (QA)

## Salary Benchmarking Report UK 2021



Part of Acacium Group

### Trends for Quality Assurance 2021

There are various international events impacting life sciences quality assurance, as well as the disruptive impact of Covid-19. With the challenges of digital transformation, temporary emergency accommodations and the growing demands on quality assurance teams, there is a high demand for skilled specialists and outsourced experience across the industry. With the demand for QA professionals still high, particularly amongst outsourcers and contractors, these are some of the key factors impacting the quality assurance recruitment market.

### Competition for talented professionals

The competitive nature of recruiting talented professionals within the quality assurance space in life sciences continues. Candidates will often have various other offers during a hiring process, adding more importance to employer branding, response times and competitive packages to ensure top talent is secured.

Competition in the market is not limited to hiring new professionals in QA; headhunting QA talent is on the increase and, particularly in smaller biopharmaceutical companies, there is difficulty in retaining talented quality assurance professionals, as they are approached with higher salaries and competitive employment packages.

With job hopping on the rise in QA, many talent acquisition teams are looking into creative ways to ensure their employer branding, company culture and employment packages can compete.

### The importance of team culture in quality

The role of quality assurance and control within life sciences companies has adapted over the years; as a core area of product development, quality teams need to be well-integrated across various departments.

Developments in areas such as digital transformation and continuous improvement have further diversified quality teams' roles and influence within the wider business. In such a competitive recruitment market, it is important that companies hiring QA professionals have a strong understanding of their internal culture so they can best target the most compatible QA talent.

Teams where the QA processes are well established and siloed may struggle to retain innovative QA professionals that wish to explore new concepts. Conversely, companies investing in continuous development may be able to use this well integrated culture to appeal to talent within the industry.

Some teams, where the internal QA processes are not as well established, such as those with more of an academic background, may need to hire QA professionals that can help establish this culture and integration.

Culture is a core part of not only retention, but also as part of the hiring process. Talent acquisition teams that are able to effectively and accurately promote their internal structures and company visions for QA are having greater success in attracting compatible and skilled professionals.

### IR35 changes impacting permanent recruitment

The changes to IR35 were implemented in the UK on 6th April 2021. These changes effectively change the way contracted workers status under IR35 is determined and gives the hiring company more liability in these determinations.

With companies facing the prospect that some quality assurance and control roles may now fall in scope of IR35, there has been an increase in consideration for permanent employment over contracting. Similarly, we are seeing a rise in the number of contractors, which previously would not consider a permanent role, being more open to permanent employment.

This has had a double-edged sword impact of the QA recruitment industry as there are more potential candidates that talent acquisition teams can approach on a contract or permanent basis, yet, this also adds to the already problematic competition within the market.

It is key that life sciences companies have a strong understanding of the motivators and industry trends to ensure they are able to compete for and retain desirable QA professionals.

### Flexibility within the industry

The desire for home-based and more flexible quality assurance jobs has been on the increase for several years. We frequently have candidates asking for roles where they can work from home or reduce their hours required onsite – many willing to take a lower pay rate to secure this benefit.

Work/Life balance is becoming more prevalent across many industries; however, many QA leads have been slow to adopt more flexible working standards as quality based roles tend to require collaboration and site visits.

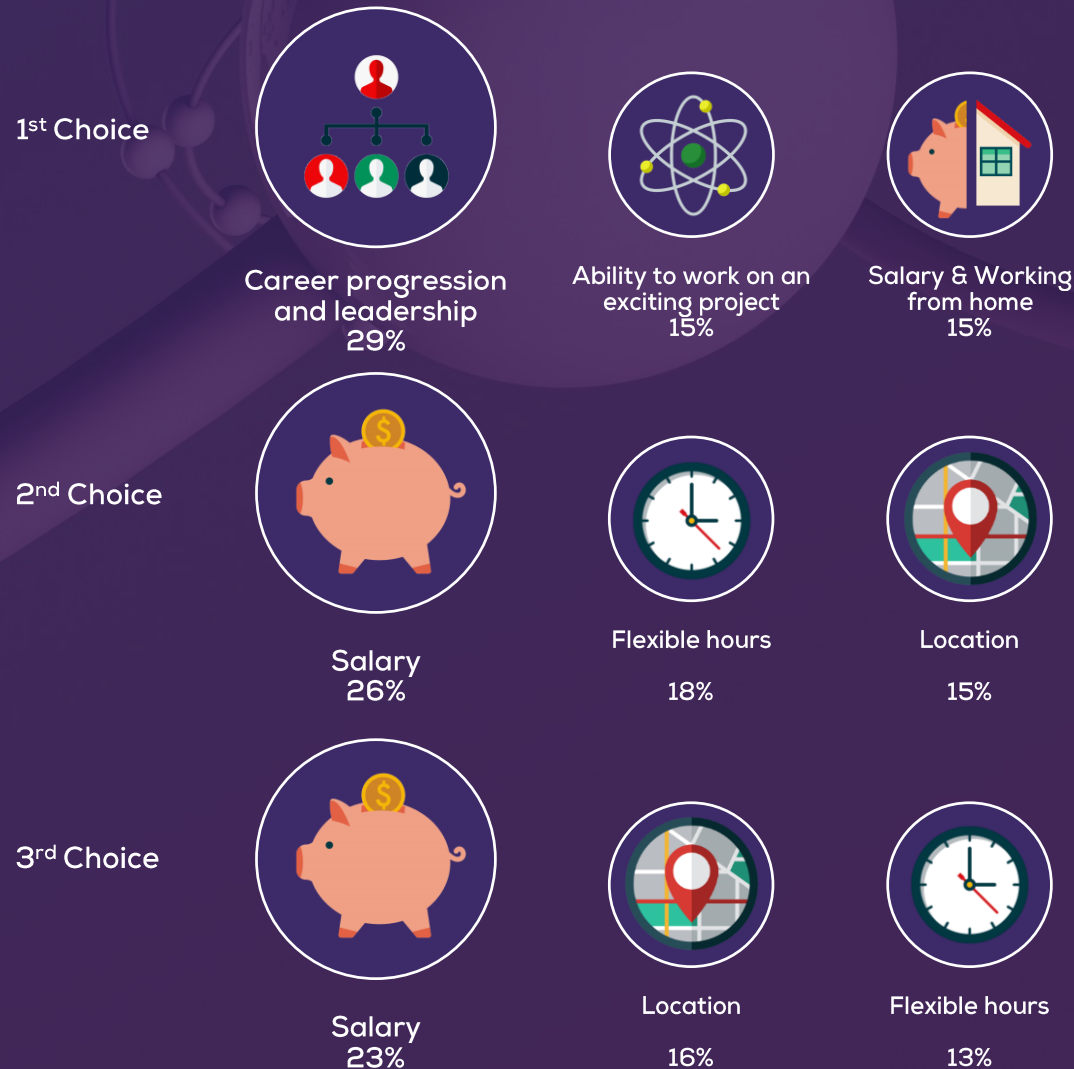
Being able to work from home to be there for a plumber or to shift their hours to take a parent to an appointment can be more appealing to the candidate market than even high salaries. The global pandemic has forced many businesses to rethink working from home and enforce measures to quickly get teams working remotely, so it is expected that the demand will increase as more quality assurance positions are able to offer flexibility.

A recent survey from Hobson Prior identified that "Working from home" and "Flexible hours" were highly ranked amongst quality professionals as important when considering job offers. This could be beneficial to smaller companies that may have more opportunity to offer this flexibility when competing with larger pharmaceutical enterprises that may have more limitations.

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What factors are most important to them when considering new job opportunities?



In order to attract the best talent in the industry, it is important to know what factors matter most to potential candidates when assessing new job opportunities.

We surveyed quality assurance professionals asking them to rank what factors are most important to them when considering new job opportunities out of the following options:



Career progression and leadership was the highest ranked factor impacting QA professionals (29%), closely followed by the ability to work on an exciting project, further highlighting the importance of a strong company culture for quality's role within the business.

Similarly, flexible hours and working from home were both popular choices for the second most important factor. This mirrors the growing demand for better work/life balance from candidates across quality assurance recruitment.

Salary stood out as the most popular second (26%) and third choice (23%). This may suggest that although QA candidates may be willing to consider a lower base salary for more flexibility, remuneration is still a core concern.

With site visits and travel fairly common across QA roles, it is unsurprising that location is a key factor in decision making for potential candidates. The introduction of remote working and flexibility with QA may help companies with seemingly less appealing site locations.



# Biological Candidates

Covering:

Biologics, Vaccines & ATMP

GMP /GDP	Job Title	Junior QA			Manager QA			Senior QA		
		QA Associate	QA Officer	QA Specialist	QA Team Lead	QA Manager	QA Auditor	QP	Head of Quality	QA Director
	Salary Range	£31,125	£40,039	£47,200	£52,800	£60,267	£61,333	£91,000	£86,833	£103,000

GCP /GLP	Job Title	Junior QA			Manager QA			Senior QA	
		QA Associate	QA Officer	QA Specialist	QA Team Lead	QA Manager	QA Auditor	Head of Quality	QA Director
	Salary Range	£32,456	£41,143	£46,802	£54,500	£65,000	£70,250	£89,400	£110,000



# Pharmaceutical Candidates

Covering:

Pharmaceutical, Generics, Specials  
& Radiopharmaceuticals

GMP /GDP	Job Title	Junior QA			Manager QA			Senior QA		
		QA Associate	QA Officer	QA Specialist	QA Team Lead	QA Manager	QA Auditor	QP	Head of Quality	QA Director
	Salary Range	£29,100	£39,259	£47,800	£50,200	£59,643	£59,933	£83,111	£87,500	£109,444

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# Average salary ranges: Overview

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# Contact Us

Due to the general nature of this information, it is to be used as a UK guide and not area or company specific. When you come to recruit, your budget may differ slightly from our averages.

Our specialist quality assurance solutions allow us to place experienced mid-high level candidates across various areas of regulation within your business, including:

· **Quality Systems** · **Quality Engineer** · **Medical Devices** · **Auditing** · **RP** · **QP** ·

If you would like us to conduct a salary benchmarking report, specific to your company, location, specific position or to discuss recruitment solutions with our QA team, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

## Contact our quality assurance specialists



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## Who are Hobson Prior

Hobson Prior is a leading specialist life sciences recruiter, focused on finding and placing exceptional candidates across the global life sciences industry.

Our highly selective clients trust us to source and secure the best contract and permanent candidates to contribute to their success.

We've placed over 6,000 life sciences professionals across 25 countries and invest time to understand the exact requirements of our clients with the aim to build long-term recruitment partnerships.

This data is based on the current salaries reported by 243 candidates working across different quality assurance roles within the biological and pharmaceutical industries inside the UK.

Of the reported candidates, their experiences cover;

- GMP, GDP, GCP, GLP
- Pharmaceutical, Sterile, Biological & ATMP products
- Locations across the entire UK
- From 1 – 30 years experience within QA

Thank you