CONSULTINGDEMAND · RATE BENCHMARK

UK Consultant Day Rate *Benchmark*

Median contract day rates for nine consulting and adjacent contract job titles, from 3,659 quoted rates in advertised UK vacancies over the six months to 21 August 2026. Every figure carries its sample size, and every figure was checked against its source page before publication.

+21.75%

Cybersecurity Consultant

The fastest-rising job title tracked, at a £599 median. It rests on only 43 quoted rates, so the direction is firmer than the magnitude.

−12.00%

Management Consultant

The steepest fall tracked, from £625 to £550, on 67 quoted rates. Generalist advisory is repricing while security and data climb.

PUBLISHED	DATA AS OF	SAMPLE	JOB TITLES	SOURCE
22 August 2026	21 August 2026	3,659 quoted rates	9	IT Jobs Watch

Free to cite with attribution

01 · THE BENCHMARK

Nine job titles, ranked by annual change

JOB TITLE	MEDIAN	YEAR AGO	CHANGE	SAMPLE
Cybersecurity Consultant	£599	£492	+21.75%	43
Data Scientist	£600	£531	+12.94%	217
Change Manager	£550	£500	+10.00%	155
Project Manager	£540	£525	+2.86%	1,287
IT Consultant	£525	£516	+1.69%	45
Business Analyst	£500	£500	*not published*	1,376
SAP Consultant	£550	£560	−1.79%	240
Cloud Architect	£600	£633	−5.14%	229
Management Consultant	£550	£625	−12.00%	67
Total quoted rates				**3,659**

Median advertised daily rates, UK contract and interim market, six months to 21 August 2026 against the same period in 2025. Bars are scaled to the absolute change. Every value is as published by IT Jobs Watch on its per-title page; the only figure of ours is the total, which is the sum of the sample column. Retrieved 22 August 2026.

Business Analyst has no published change figure. The source prints a dash rather than a percentage for that title this period. Both medians are £500, so the change is zero, but the cell reads "not published" rather than showing a 0.00% the source does not publish.

Why some percentages do not reproduce from the medians shown. The change column is the source's own figure, computed on its unrounded series, while the medians are rounded to the nearest pound. Dividing £600 by £531 gives 12.99%, not the 12.94% published for Data Scientist. Quote the change as published rather than recalculating it.

REPORTED SEPARATELY — TWO SKILL MARKERS, NOT JOB TITLES

SKILL CITED IN VACANCY	MEDIAN	YEAR AGO	CHANGE	SAMPLE
Machine Learning	£575	£556	+3.42%	1,018
Artificial Intelligence	£559	£550	+1.64%	3,018

These two rows cannot be added to the table above. The source files them under Processes & Methodologies and counts vacancies *citing* the skill, where the nine rows above count vacancies *requiring* a named job title. A Business Analyst vacancy mentioning AI appears in both populations, so summing the two tables would double-count. They measure the rate across every contract role citing that skill — not the rate for an "AI consultant", which is not a job title this source tracks.

02 · INTERPRETATION

The market split in two this year

> **This section is argument, not data.** Every figure it cites comes from the table on the previous page. The explanations offered for those figures are ours and are not established by the source.

The most useful thing in the table is not any individual rate. It is the spread. Cybersecurity rose 21.75% while management consulting fell 12.00%, in the same market, over the same twelve months, among people who would both call themselves consultants.

The gap swung by £182 a day

A year ago the Management Consultant median sat £133 a day above the Cybersecurity Consultant median. It now sits £49 below. All three figures are differences between published medians.

Our reading is that what changed is the denominator the buyer measures a fee against. Security work is bought by someone managing a quantified exposure, and the comparison is not what a consultant costs but what a breach costs. Generalist advisory is bought from a discretionary budget, and discretionary budgets get benchmarked harder. Rate data alone cannot evidence that, and we are not claiming it does.

A falling rate is not a falling role

Cloud Architect fell 5.14% to £600, in a year when Data Scientist rose 12.94%. But the source also shows 229 quoted Cloud Architect rates this period against 136 in the same period last year. More vacancies quoted a rate, not fewer. Whatever is happening to the rate, it is not that the role is disappearing.

The AI figure is not the one most people expect

Vacancies citing AI carry a £559 median, up 1.64%, on the largest sample in this report at 3,018 quoted rates. Vacancies citing Machine Learning sit at £575, up 3.42%, on 1,018. Both are skill markers spanning every contract role that mentions them, which is precisely why they track close to the broad market. They say nothing about what a specialist AI advisory engagement costs, and this report has no data on that question.

> **Sample size is not a footnote here.** The two largest movements sit on the two smallest samples: 43 quoted rates for Cybersecurity Consultant and 67 for Management Consultant. A handful of unusually paid contracts inside the window moves a 43-rate median a long way. Treat the direction of both as credible and the magnitude as soft, and carry the sample size with the figure wherever you quote it.

Contractor pay is not consultancy billing

Every figure here is an advertised rate for an individual contract or interim role. It is not what a consultancy bills a client for that person's time, and this report contains no data on firm billing rates. Do not use this table to price a proposal.

03 · METHOD AND LIMITS

How this was compiled

Source

IT Jobs Watch, which derives medians from daily rates quoted in advertised UK contract vacancies. No figure here is modelled, estimated or survey-derived.

Window

The six months ending 21 August 2026, against the same period in 2025. This is the source's own reporting window, not one we selected.

What it measures

Advertised daily rates for individual contract and interim roles. Not consultancy billing rates, and not permanent salaries.

How the nine titles were chosen

They are the consulting and adjacent contract job titles covered by our published rate analyses. This is an editorial selection, not a statistical sample of the market, and no title was dropped after its figures were seen.

Verification

All 36 values in the main table, and both skill-marker rows, were checked against the source's per-title pages on 22 August 2026 and match as published. Where the source prints no figure, this report prints none.

Regional figures

Cloud Architect: £630 in London on 119 quoted rates, against £600 for the UK excluding London, a premium of 5.0%. SAP Consultant: £610 in London on 55 quoted rates, against £540 for the UK excluding London. Both come from the source's separate London pages.

Known limits

Advertised rates are asking rates. They indicate what is being offered, not what was finally paid, and they cover only vacancies that published a number.

Review cycle

We intend to review this quarterly against the same source, and to restate rather than revise, so a superseded edition stays quotable.

HOW TO CITE THIS REPORT

ConsultingDemand, “UK Consultant Day Rate Benchmark 2026”, data as of 21 August 2026.
https://consultingdemand.com/reports/uk-consultant-day-rate-benchmark/

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Sources

Every figure comes from IT Jobs Watch, which publishes a page per job title at `itjobswatch.co.uk/contracts/uk/<title>` and per region at `itjobswatch.co.uk/contracts/london/<title>`. Each page carries the median, the year-ago median, the annual change and the number of quoted rates used here.

Job titles: Cybersecurity Consultant · Data Scientist · Change Manager · Project Manager · IT Consultant · Business Analyst · SAP Consultant · Cloud Architect · Management Consultant. **Skill markers:** Artificial Intelligence · Machine Learning.