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BDO Motor Retail

Motor Salary Survey

2025

Issued for: SUMMARY VERSION - Full version available to participants only



THE BDO MOTOR SALARY SURVEY 2025 PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE REMUNERATION DATA WHICH WILL PROVIDE FOR MEANINGFUL COMPARISON

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Managing Director / CEO
Dealer Principal
Finance Director
HR Director/Manager
IT Director/Manager
Marketing Director/Manager
Admin – Dealer Accountant
Admin – Assistant Accountant
Admin – Sales Administrator
Finance & Insurance Manager
New – Retail Sales Manager
New – Fleet Sales Manager
New – Retail Salesperson
New – Fleet Salesperson
Used – Manager
Used – Salesperson
Used – Stock Buyer
Parts – Manager
Parts – Assistant Manager
Parts – Store Person
Parts – Delivery Driver
Service – Manager
Service – Assistant Manager
Service – Adviser
Service – Warranty Clerk
Service – Workshop Controller
Service – Technician – 1 yr 13
Service - Technician – 2 yrs
Service - Technician – 3+ yrs
BDO Motor Retail Team 14



28%

ESTIMATED ANNUAL LEVEL OF EMPLOYEE TURNOVER IN THE MOTOR RETAIL SECTOR (2023 – 31%)

Introduction

The 2025 Motor Salary Survey

Employee costs are the largest expense in any dealership, accounting for a significant percentage of gross profit, and with increasing pressures on margins, expense and employee management is critical to sustained profitability. Therefore, ability of businesses to not only appropriately remunerate employees but also provide structures for their development remains essential.

Continuing challenges

The past year has presented a challenging economic landscape for the motor retail industry. Inflationary pressures, high interest rates, legislative changes and persistent supply chain disruptions have created a cautious consumer environment, with many households delaying major purchases such as vehicles. These macroeconomic headwinds have had a direct impact on business performance and, potentially, on how remuneration is structured across the sector.

In response to these pressures, employers have begun to shift their focus from performance-linked pay to more stable and predictable salary models. The data found that this strategic realignment is starting to reflect a broader effort to support employee retention and morale while managing costs in an uncertain market. The 2025 Motor Salary Survey once again offers a detailed view of how these trends are playing out across different departments and roles.

Beyond just remuneration, the survey also highlights shifts in workforce dynamics. Staff turnover fell to 28%, down from 32% the previous year, indicating improved retention and/or loyalty. However, the overall workforce among survey participants contracted by 8%, suggesting that businesses are taking a cautious approach to hiring. Most respondents expect staffing levels to remain stable in the coming year, though recruitment challenges persist - particularly for service technicians, who continue to be the most difficult roles to fill.

Adapting to ongoing headwinds

Taken together, these findings reflect a sector that continues to review and adapt its remuneration strategies to meet both economic and operational challenges. The data suggests dealers may be rebalancing pay structures to offer greater security, while still incentivising performance where appropriate. The emphasis on increasing basic pay, even in departments where total remuneration has remained flat, signals a commitment to supporting employees through uncertain times. As automotive recruitment expert Lynda Ennis, founder of Ennis & Co, highlights later in this report, investment in a dealer group's workforce is crucial for future-proofing the business.

As the motor retail industry continues to evolve – driven by electrification, digital transformation, and changing consumer expectations - remuneration will remain a critical lever for attracting and retaining talent. The trends observed in 2025 suggest that businesses are increasingly aware of the need to align pay structures with both market realities and workforce priorities, setting the stage for a more resilient and responsive sector in the years ahead. This resilience has been further tested with the increase in employers' NICs, leading the majority of our respondents to indicate the expectation this will impact future pay increases and the level of recruitment.

We continue to believe this survey proves a useful tool in the monitoring of employee costs, by enabling management to evaluate these against national averages and those entities within their turnover segment. We would like to thank those dealers who have invested the time to participate, without your support the BDO Motor Salary Survey would not be possible.



2%

AVERAGE PERCENTAGE YEAR ON YEAR INCREASE IN PAY ACROSS THE ROLES SURVEYED (EXCLUDING MANAGEMENT POSITIONS)

Findings

Results of the 2025 Motor Salary Survey

Overall, the survey shows that total remuneration across all positions, including management, increased by 5%. However, when management roles are excluded, the increase drops to just 2%. The data shows that the average salary for non-management employees increased from £46,917 to £47,674. This modest growth masks a more significant shift in the composition of pay. Basic salaries rose by 5%, while commissions and bonuses declined by 7%, indicating a potential move away from variable pay. This is the second year in succession where this has happened, suggesting that employers might be prioritising income stability for their workforce in response to fluctuating sales volumes and tighter margins. Two years does not necessarily make a trend, but perhaps this could mark the start of long-touted changes.

The vehicle department provides a particularly interesting case study. Despite no overall growth in total pay, it recorded the highest average increase in base salary at 6%. This increase was offset by a 9% decline in variable pay, resulting in flat total remuneration. The data implies that pay structures in this department are being recalibrated to reduce reliance on commission, which has become less predictable in the current market. Nevertheless, the vehicle department continues to have the highest proportion of commission and bonuses, accounting for 36% of total pay, which underscores its ongoing dependence on performance-based earnings.

			% change		
Department	2025	2024	Total	Basic	Variable
Vehicles	£63,275	£63,250	0%	6%	-9%
Parts	£35,050	£35,050	0%	4%	-19%
Service	£42,050	£40,750	3%	3%	5%
Administration	£37,850	£36,000	5%	4%	31%

In the parts department, total pay remained unchanged. Basic salaries increased by 4%, but this was counterbalanced by a 19% drop in other pay. The shift toward fixed pay is even more pronounced here, with basic salaries now making up 86% of total remuneration. This could reflect a response to reduced sales activity or a strategic decision to simplify pay structures.

The service department, which had seen stronger pay growth in previous years, experienced a more moderate increase of 3% in total remuneration. Basic pay rose by 3%, and other pay increased by 5%, suggesting a more balanced and sustainable approach to compensation. This stabilization may indicate that previous adjustments to address technician shortages and retention have now settled into a more consistent pattern.

Administration roles saw a 5% increase in total pay, with basic salaries rising by 4% and other pay jumping by 31%. Although variable pay remains a small component of overall remuneration in this area - just 5% - the sharp rise in other pay points to targeted bonuses or retention incentives for specific roles. Administration continues to be the most heavily weighted toward basic pay, with 95% of total remuneration coming from fixed salary.

Management roles stood out with the largest overall increase in pay, rising by 10%. This growth was evenly split between basic and other pay, which increased by 10% and 11% respectively. Basic salaries now account for 71% of total remuneration in management positions. While this category has historically shown significant variability, the balanced growth suggests a continued emphasis on rewarding performance while ensuring competitive base pay.

Remuneration is not all about physical pay, and dealers continue to offer a range of benefits to employees with 94% of employees receiving these. Within this are 52% of employees who receive car benefits (2024: 49%). This area will undergo changes in 2026 – all covered in our employment tax hot topics in the following pages.

The average working week has fallen slightly to 41 hours (2024:42) with employees continuing to be offered 25 days of annual leave (2024: 25).



A little less conversation, a little more action please

Written by Lynda Ennis, Founder & CEO, Ennis & Co

Nearly four years passed between the Brexit referendum being announced in 2016 and the actual withdrawal. The measurable consequence of the decision across business was almost immediate. And that was swiftly followed by COVID-19 and the supply chain disruption with equally transparent effects.

Well, I am going to call 2025 as the first year that the true commercial impact of electrification policy can be seen across the automotive industry in the UK. European politics and the pandemic aside, the ZEV legislation first floated by Theresa May in 2018 is now driving change in the retail market at a scale to be visible in every part of the sector. We've moved from the theory and debate about technology targets to the reality of structural change, driven by the need to fund new technology which leaders in the industry are navigating in very different ways.

As we look at the market today, this is my observation of how the brightest and best are delivering results whilst others talk a good game. It's not a comment on the politics of either Brexit or electrification.

Winning in the showroom

Successful retailers evolve and succeed in all market conditions, in spite of the heavy investment required to support EV sales and aftersales infrastructure. And while some of the most dramatic agency shifts have slowed or even reversed, retailers remain caught in a world of mixed models, making long-term planning more complex than ever.

Over the last 12 months, we have seen how adaptability and strategic focus can deliver results:

- **Margin discipline matters more than ever.** With manufacturers and investors scrutinising cost bases, retailers who can find efficiencies in operations, talent management, and digitalisation are pulling ahead. With government policy driving the market, not customer demand, cost review is a daily and ongoing activity. Successful operators such as Lookers and Steven Eagell continually look at the cost base embedding a lean, agile mindset across the organisation.
- **Diversification is paying dividends.** Retail groups with multi-brand portfolios have successfully used new entrants as an opportunity to spread risk. Low-cost start-up with Chinese brands, eager to get a foothold in the market have also helped small and medium sized retailers bridge the gap as some legacy OEMs struggle to offer competitive products.
- **Customer experience is now the battlefield.** As pricing becomes increasingly standardised, the differentiator is service. Those who invest in culture, training, and technology to enhance customer interactions, both in person and online, have won loyalty in a crowded market. But it must be within tight cost controls.
- **Matching skills to market needs.** As technology changes, the skills needed to sell and serve need to evolve quickly. IMI technician training, embraced by some, needs to be adopted at scale to attract talent, raising the image of aftersales to the high-tech role it is. In the showroom investment in people has enabled them to embrace new technology and inspire customers, but more is needed.



A little less conversation, a little more action please

Managing the brand at national level

During 2025 we have seen five new brands from China start sales in the UK, each one looking to secure significant sales volumes. The battle for market share has fuelled a price war, funded by several factors including margin erosion and cost cutting for established OEMs and the new operational mindset of Chinese entrants.

- **Fixing the roof before the rain comes.** Existing UK operations with structures developed to meet planned sales volumes that are no longer achievable have felt the heat this year. The challenge of sizing their operations to meet the market has meant a freeze on recruitment, and multi-tasking across areas as teams shrink. Successful brands have invested time in communication with retail partners to ensure clear understanding and alignment.
- **Centralisation v localisation.** This year has seen further aggregation of resources, with cutting back of national activities such as design functions and marketing programmes. The impact of centralised strategies is the loss of market awareness and requires even better communication by the UK teams to retain the influence needed to ensure local relevance.
- **Delivery at China speed.** The western methodology of developing product, place and price at a steady pace for market entry is at odds with the Chinese approach of rapid results. The speed of product development and delivery to market requires the people in-market to be comfortable operating in a fast-changing environment. Agility, and the ability to live with ambiguity are core requirements as decisions about product and operation change, but targets do not.

2025 has shown us the cost of skills shortages and attrition. As we look ahead to next year, the focus must be on developing resilience in the workforce itself, building teams who can flex across models, adapt to new technologies, and deliver consistently strong experiences no matter how the market shifts. Investing in leadership, communication and cultural alignment is no longer optional. It is the foundation for future-proofing a business.

From our vantage point in executive search and talent strategy, we see retailers who understand this distinction, those who see people not as a cost to be managed but as the critical driver of resilience, leading the way. They are building businesses that are not only weathering the current storm but are also laying the groundwork for the next phase of industry transformation.

For more information contact lynda.ennis@ennisco.co.uk



LYNDA ENNIS | Founder & CEO, Ennis & Co



52%

PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES RECEIVING CAR BENEFITS AS PART OF THEIR REMUNERATION PACKAGE (2024 – 49%)

Employee reward and benefits

The end as we know it for Employee Car Ownership Schemes (ECOS)

The Autumn 2024 budget included an announcement to state that ECOS arrangements were to be reviewed. The draft legislation has since been published, which confirms that from 6 October 2026 a car or van will be treated as a company car, even if ownership is transferred under qualifying arrangements.

The way ECOS arrangements typically work is to sell the car at landed price to an employee, financed via a loan; and then sell the car back to the manufacturer or retailer after a period of 4-6 months, with the proceeds settling the loan (in general).

Summary of the Change

Arrangements are 'qualifying arrangements' if any of the following applies in relation to them:

- they include restrictions on the private use of the car or van by the employee or member;
- they provide for a person other than the employee or member to be the registered keeper of the car or van;
- they provide for the employee or member, after a certain period of time or in certain circumstances, to transfer the property in the car or van to another person for an amount set out or determined in accordance with the arrangements; or
- they are of a description specified in regulations made by the Treasury.

The impact and the options

It is likely that all or at least some of the above will be present to some degree in the way in which most current ECOS arrangements operate.

This will obviously have significant implications for employers with ECOS schemes and employees too, where ECOS has been used for a considerable amount of time as a way of employees obtaining vehicles.

Although continued lobbying and consultation is ongoing between the industry and HM Treasury, employers as part of their own planning will need to consider alternatives.

In the first instance, it may be appropriate to undertake some financial modelling to assess the impact, but choices going forward may include:

- Switch to greater use of EVs, provided as a company car. The provision of an EV as a company car can be more tax efficient, from an employee perspective, than providing the car as an ECOS vehicle;
- Continue with the ECOS, and consider how the much high benefit in kind charge will be funded – eg an employee cost, or set off by the company; or
- Consider a variation on the ECOS arrangement that doesn't trigger the company car benefit in kind but has other commercial and personal implications to consider.

For any employers that currently have ECOS and need support in considering their options, please do not hesitate to contact the BDO employment tax team.



>20,000

THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED BY THE PARTICPANTS IN OUR SURVEY

Employee reward and benefits

Hot topics

Mandatory Payrolling of Benefits in Kind

The mandatory reporting and paying of benefits in kind via payroll software has now been delayed from April 2026 to 2027, partly in response from industry, which highlighted the significant administrative burden that it is expected to cause for employers, and the need for greater communication with employees as well as their understanding of the proposed changes.

It is important that employers understand this change is not quite as simple as sticking 1/12 of a benefit value in the payroll each month (for those monthly payrolls at least).

From our experience in helping employers 'go live' in April 2025 and many others that are currently preparing to go live in advance of the mandatory requirement taking effect, there are key streams for employers to assess and put processes in place. Employers will need to coordinate working groups with benefit provider(s), payroll teams (in-house/bureau/outsource), and manage employee communications:

- Benefits – Employers will need to establish how many employee benefits are provided, are they from the same provider, and whether the information can be provided on a timely basis for each pay period?. Payrolling benefits will mean real time benefit reporting, so if an employee joins, leaves, or makes a change to their benefit, it will be key to understand where that information is processed, and how it impacts any benefit calculation
- Payroll – In-house payroll teams and payroll bureaus of course have their own deadlines to process each payroll. It will be critical therefore that any benefit information is available prior to this, and also that there is time for the benefit in kind calculations (for example cars) to be carried out. A key complexity here is the optional remuneration arrangement rules, and how this impacts the calculation for certain benefits.
- Employees and communications – Finally, and perhaps most importantly, how will the change be communicated to employees? What will payslips look like and will this be clear to employees. Employers will need to help employees understand the impact on their tax code, particularly in the first year.

National Minimum Wage

Since the launch of HMRC's National Minimum Wage (NMW) campaign across the UK motor industry 2 years ago, we have seen enquiries continue for motor employers. As you might expect, these are not necessarily quick processes and involve the supply of large volumes of information as well as the management time involved in dealing with communications and expectations effectively with HMRC.

Whilst it is a common understanding that Motor Retail employers are of course not paying hourly rates below NMW rates, it is the adjustments that need to be made as a result of additional payments, deductions, uniform costs, and working time arrangements, that cause issues with NMW compliance.

Frequent follow-up points from HMRC visits, at least initially, appear to relate to working time patterns (arriving early on shift, finishing late), uniform costs not being factored into the calculation of pay for NMW purposes, and also apprentices appear to be a common area where employers experience challenges with understanding the rules.

If employers are not already part of a HMRC review, we would recommend that they proactively consider NMW compliance beyond just what is being processed through the payroll and seek external advice in relation to the complexities of the calculation of NMW pay.



Scope

How we have compiled this survey

SCOPE

Motor dealerships across the UK were invited to submit data for the BDO Motor Salary Survey 2025. This is the 15th survey to be conducted, with participating entities ranging from groups with a handful of dealerships through to some of the largest motor retail groups in the UK.

DATA COLLECTION

Survey data was collected directly by BDO LLP and was controlled via a unique dealer reference code to ensure confidentiality. In addition to the survey data, information was also collected in relation to dealership turnover, geographic location, staff levels and incentive packages.

CURRENCY OF DATA

The survey report is based on salary information as at 31 March 2025.

SAMPLE SIZE

A minimum sample size has been established for each position to ensure the anonymity of the reported data. Where it was determined that the sample size for certain reported information was not adequate for inclusion in the survey 'N/A' has been shown within the information detailed within pages 12 to 41. No instances of this were found in this year's survey.

DATA VALIDATION

Every care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the data contained in this survey. Any data which could not be validated was excluded from the survey.

DISCLAIMER

BDO has prepared the 'Motor Salary Survey 2025' on the basis of data submitted by dealers participating in the survey.

BDO has not performed any audit or review procedures in respect of the data submitted to the survey. Neither the firm nor any member or employee of the firm undertakes any responsibility or accepts liability in any way whatsoever in respect of the Motor Salary Survey 2025, including any errors or omissions in the survey however caused.

In addition, the averages shown within this document are based upon the averages for the employee data that was submitted to us. Therefore, no weighted average calculations have been taken into consideration i.e. should a company have one Managing Director/CEO, one Finance Director and 20 New Retail Sales Managers only, the averages shown would be that of one Managing Director/CEO, one Finance Director and one New Retail Sales Manager.

The contents of this publication are not a substitute for specific advice and should not be relied upon as such. Accordingly, while every care has been taken in the presentation of the publication, no responsibility is accepted for persons acting on this information.



Salary survey reporting format

A detailed overview of factors such as turnover, salary components, employee profile and other benefits

CLASSIFICATION

- Quartiles: this shows the average total salary for each quartile within each reported positions category. This was calculated by taking the number of positions completed, arranging them in size order and then splitting them into quartiles.
- Turnover: defined as <£250m, £250m to £500m, or >£500m total annual sales of the dealership. This information provides an insight into the relative variances in sales compared to dealership size and complexity.

SALARY PACKAGE COMPONENTS

The amounts shown for average 'total' package, 'base', 'commissions' and 'bonus and other' represent the average for those employees that reported amounts under each category.

- Base: relates to the base component of the salary package. This is also known as the fixed salary component.
- Commissions: relates to the incentive/commission component of the salary package. This is also known as the variable salary component.
- Bonus and other: relates to any periodic bonuses and other payments received by employees including overtime and car allowance (for example).
- Average total package: represents the average income of all employees included in the survey for that position description.

EMPLOYEE PROFILE

- Years at dealership: represents the average number of years that the reported employees have been with the dealership. It does not represent the length of service in the industry.
- Holiday entitlement: represents the average number of days annual leave that the reported employee is entitled to per annum.
- Hours worked per week: represents the average number of hours worked per week by the reported employee in a standard week.

OTHER BENEFITS

- Pension contributions: displays the percentage of employees for the reported position that were paying contributions toward the provision of a pension.
- Car benefits: displays the percentage of employees for the reported position that have been paid a car allowance in lieu of the use of a company vehicle.
- Other benefits: this shows the percentage of employees for the reported position that have received any other benefit. For example, private fuel, benefits received from a third party, private health insurance, death in service benefit, share options or such like.

Positions reported

The Motor Salary Survey has collected and compiled data on a wide range of dealership positions for comparison to your current remuneration packages led this survey



MANAGEMENT

Managing Director / CEO
Dealer Principal
Finance Director
HR Director/Manager
IT Director/Manager
Marketing Director/Manager

ADMINISTRATION

Dealer Accountant
Assistant Accountant
Sales Administrator



VEHICLES

Finance & Insurance Manager
New - Retail Sales Manager
New - Fleet Sales Manager
New - Retail Salesperson
New - Fleet Salesperson
Used - Manager
Used - Salesperson
Used - Stock Buyer



PARTS

Manager
Assistant Manager
Store Person
Delivery Driver



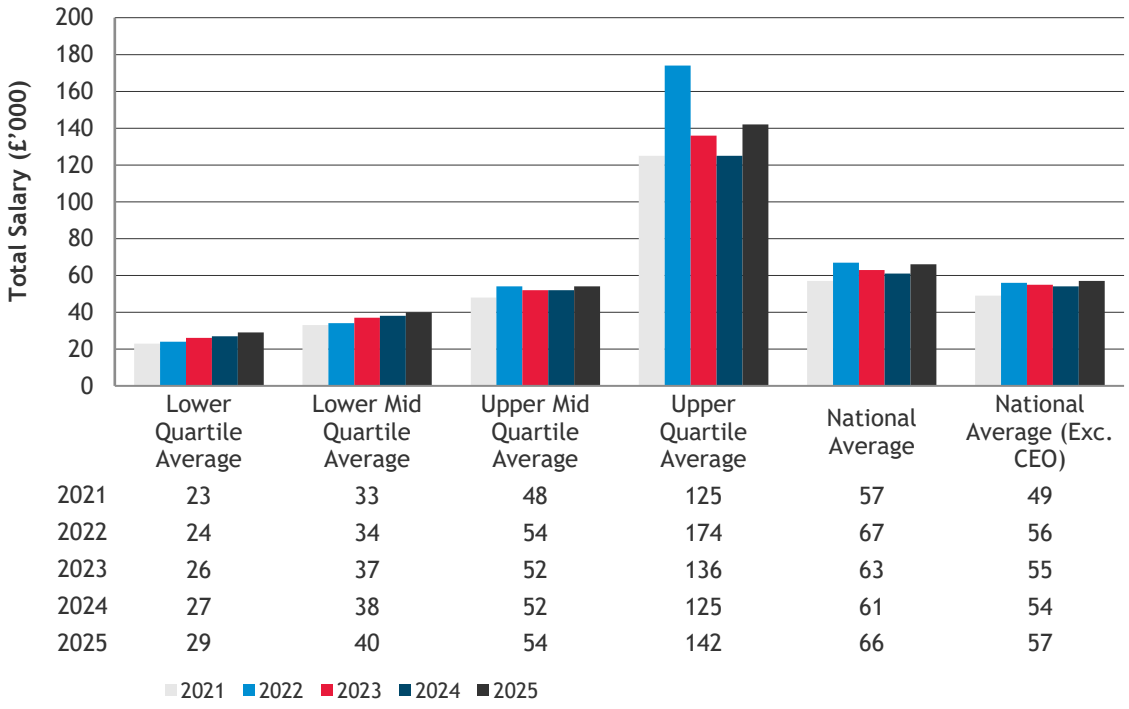
SERVICE

Manager
Assistant Manager
Adviser
Warranty Clerk
Workshop Controller
Technician - 1 Year
Technician - 2 Years
Technician - 3+ Years



Positions reported

All positions



	Lower Quartile Average	Lower Mid Quartile Average	Upper Mid Quartile Average	Upper Quartile Average	National Average	National Average (Exc. CEO)
2021	23	33	48	125	57	49
2022	24	34	54	174	67	56
2023	26	37	52	136	63	55
2024	27	38	52	125	61	54
2025	29	40	54	142	66	57

ALL POSITIONS	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£49,095
Commissions	£6,486
Bonus and other	£10,722
TOTAL	**£66,303**

EMPLOYEE PROFILE	NATIONAL AVG
Average years at dealership	9 years
Average holiday entitlement	25 days
Average hours worked per week	41 hours

OTHER BENEFITS	NATIONAL AVG
Pension contributions	91%
Car benefits	51%
Other benefits	94%

TURNOVER < £250m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£45,915
Commissions	£8,316
Bonus and other	£12,914
TOTAL	**£67,145**

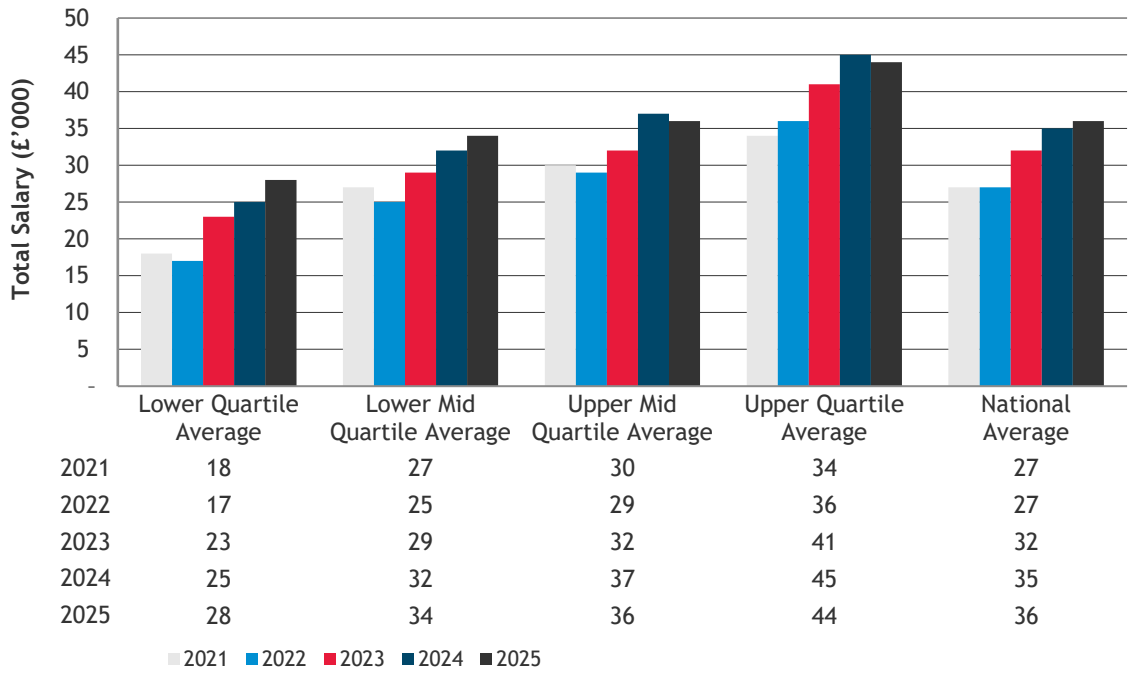
TURNOVER £250m to £500m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£48.558
Commissions	£7,633
Bonus and other	£4,205
TOTAL	**£60,696**

TURNOVER > £500m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£51,302
Commissions	£2,741
Bonus and other	£12,653
TOTAL	**£66,696**



Positions reported

Service – Technician – 1 Year



	Lower Quartile Average	Lower Mid Quartile Average	Upper Mid Quartile Average	Upper Quartile Average	National Average
2021	18	27	30	34	27
2022	17	25	29	36	27
2023	23	29	32	41	32
2024	25	32	37	45	35
2025	28	34	36	44	36

ALL POSITIONS	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£31,087
Commissions	£1,826
Bonus and other	£2,861
TOTAL	**£35,774**

EMPLOYEE PROFILE	NATIONAL AVG
Average years at dealership	2 years
Average holiday entitlement	24 days
Average hours worked per week	41 hours

OTHER BENEFITS	NATIONAL AVG
Pension contributions	88%
Car benefits	8%
Other benefits	92%

TURNOVER < £250m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£31,509
Commissions	£4,835
Bonus and other	£3,198
TOTAL	**£39,542**

TURNOVER £250m to £500m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£29,749
Commissions	£2,663
Bonus and other	£263
TOTAL	**£32,675**

TURNOVER > £500m	NATIONAL AVG
Base	£31,259
Commissions	£83
Bonus and other	£3,435
TOTAL	**£34,777**



Our core team

People you want to work with

We know that when selecting professional auditors and advisers it's the people that make the difference.

Our specialist national team comprises of not only audit and taxation specialists, but people that can add real value to your business even in the most challenging of times. Wherever you operate, there is a BDO partner or specialist with the knowledge and experience to make a real difference to your business.



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