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UK SOC Analyst Salary Guide

Salaries, shift pay & hiring insight for UK Managed Security Service Providers.

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At a Glance

The SOC Analyst salary market at a glance, and why the job title alone won't tell you what to pay.

Recommended MSSP Benchmark

Level	Base salary
Entry / L1 SOC Analyst	£27,000 – £33,000
Experienced L1 / developing L2	£32,000 – £40,000
L2 SOC Analyst	£36,000 – £46,000
Senior L2 / L3 / escalation analyst	£45,000 – £60,000
Specialist analyst (detection, threat hunting, IR)	£50,000 – £65,000+

Executive Summary

For UK MSSPs, SOC Analyst pay is best benchmarked by the complexity and autonomy of the work rather than title alone. A first-line analyst following established runbooks sits in a materially different market from an analyst independently investigating incidents across multiple customer tenants, tuning detections, or leading escalations.

Key Points

- A sensible core hiring range for an MSSP SOC Analyst is £27,000 – £46,000 base, spanning entry-level L1 through established L2 capability.
- Current broad-market sources do not agree on one "average": live job ad data showed a £55,000 median advertised salary for SOC Analyst vacancies in the six months to 19 October 2026, while Indeed reported £42,420 based on 146 salary reports. These are different samples and should not be treated as interchangeable.
- For senior analysts handling complex investigations, customer escalations, threat hunting or detection engineering, budget around £45,000 – £60,000; scarce specialist profiles can move above £60,000.
- Shift premiums, on-call payments, clearance requirements, hybrid expectations and the actual technical depth of the role can materially change the offer needed.
- For most MSSPs, a clear progression framework and transparent shift compensation are as important to retention as a small increase in headline base salary.

For a typical regional MSSP recruiting a competent analyst who can contribute to a 24/7 multi-tenant SOC, a realistic starting point is £29,000 – £34,000 for L1, £36,000 – £43,000 for L2, and £46,000 – £55,000 for a genuinely senior escalation analyst. Treat these as starting ranges, then adjust for technical scope, shift pattern, location, clearance and candidate scarcity.

What the Public Market Data Says

The following figures are published benchmarks available in October 2026. They measure different things, like advertised salaries, reported pay or salary-guide estimates, so the variation is informative rather than necessarily contradictory.

Source / measure	Published benchmark	How to interpret it
IT Jobs Watch: SOC Analyst job ads, 6 months to 19 Oct 2026	Median £55,000; 25th percentile £44,313; 75th percentile £65,000; 108 salary quotations	Live vacancy data, but a relatively small sample and not restricted to MSSPs. Likely includes senior, cleared and specialist roles.
Indeed: SOC Analyst UK salary page, updated 11 Oct 2026	Average £42,420; 146 salaries reported	Useful second reference point; postings and salary reports span different employers and role scopes.
UK IT salary guide, Oct 2026	SOC Analyst: £36,000 low / £42,500 median / £50,000 high	A more conservative published guide benchmark; useful for mainstream permanent roles.
2026 technology salary guide	SOC Analyst: £30,000 low / £50,000 median / £75,000 high	Broad technology salary guide with a wide range, reflecting differences in seniority and role scope.
UK L1/L2/L3 SOC salary guide, July 2026	L1 outside London £25k – £33k; L2 outside London £35k – £48k; L3 indicates higher specialist scope	Tier-specific directional reference; use alongside broader salary datasets rather than as a census.

Key Points

- **Job-title contamination:** "SOC Analyst" can include entry-level monitoring, senior incident response, cleared public-sector work and roles closer to detection engineering.
- **Advertised salary data is not the same as actual accepted salary.** Some vacancies omit salary, quote broad ranges or combine multiple levels.
- **Samples are modest.** The current IT Jobs Watch SOC Analyst headline is based on 108 salary quotations, not every SOC Analyst in the UK.

Recommended Salary Bands for UK MSSPs

These are practical permanent base-salary ranges for budgeting and offer calibration. They are deliberately segmented by capability and autonomy.

They exclude bonus, shift allowance, on-call payments, pension, benefits and employer costs.

Level / typical title	Indicative experience	Recommended base salary	Scope that usually justifies the band
Trainee / Junior L1	0 – 1 year; career changer with relevant fundamentals	£25,000 – £29,000	Structured training; alert queue; runbooks; supervised triage and escalation.
L1 SOC Analyst	~1 – 2 years or demonstrable operational readiness	£27,000 – £33,000	Alert triage, evidence gathering, ticketing, initial enrichment and accurate escalation in a 24/7 rota.
Experienced L1 / L1+	~1 – 3 years; consistently reliable operator	£31,000 – £37,000	Higher-quality triage, customer-aware communication, basic query use, playbook improvements and fewer unnecessary escalations.
L2 SOC Analyst	~2 – 5 years; independently investigates cases	£36,000 – £46,000	Correlates telemetry, investigates suspicious activity, scopes incidents, uses SIEM/EDR queries and recommends containment.
Senior L2 / L3 escalation	Typically 4+ years; depth matters more than tenure	£45,000 – £60,000	Complex incident ownership, mentoring, threat hunting, customer escalations, detection tuning and root-cause analysis.
Specialist / advanced analyst	Proven specialist depth, not just a senior title	£50,000 – £65,000+	Detection engineering, advanced KQL/SPL, threat hunting, malware/forensics, automation or incident-response leadership.

How to Use These Bands

The bands are a starting point, not a formula. Two analysts with the same title and years of experience can be doing very different jobs, so the right offer depends on what the role actually involves day to day. Use these principles to place a role in the right band.

- Do not automatically pay the L2 band for years served. Pay for independent investigation, judgement, quality of written incident reporting and ability to work without a detailed playbook.
- If the role is mostly alert handling with scripted escalation, benchmark it as L1 even if the title says "Security Analyst".
- If the role owns detection content, writes complex queries, improves SIEM use cases or automates triage, compare it with senior L2 / specialist profiles, not a standard analyst role.
- For a small SOC, one "senior analyst" may combine L2, L3, customer escalation and shift-lead duties. Make those expectations explicit and price accordingly.

Which band does your role sit in?

What the analyst does day to day	Band
Works from runbooks, triages alerts and escalates accurately	L1
Investigates cases independently, scopes incidents and recommends containment	L2
Owns complex incidents, mentors others and handles customer escalations	Senior L2 / L3
Builds detections, hunts threats or automates triage	Specialist

Base-salary reminder
All bands are base salary only. Shift allowances, on-call payments, bonus and benefits are covered on page 8.

Regional & Working-Pattern Considerations

Public regional SOC salary samples can be very small, so regional differences below are directional rather than a precise percentage adjustment. Use the role's talent pool, not office postcode alone.

Market / setup	Practical adjustment to starting benchmark	Notes
London / high-cost commuter market	Often budget toward the upper half of the band; specialist roles can exceed it	IT Jobs Watch reported a £65,000 SOC Analyst median in London for its six-month sample to 19 Oct 2026, but only 20 matching ads. This likely reflects role mix as well as location.
South East / Thames Valley	Mid-to-upper band for cleared, public-sector or large enterprise customer work	IT Jobs Watch reported a £53,000 median in the South East from 71 matching ads. Clearance and client constraints can matter more than geography.
North West / Yorkshire / Scotland	Use the core band first; pay more for scarce SIEM, incident response or cleared expertise	Published regional figures showed high medians in some areas but from very small samples (for example, 7 North West ads and 6 Scotland ads). Do not treat these as robust local averages.
South West / Midlands / Wales	Core bands often provide a useful starting point; adjust for local talent pool and on-site requirements	IT Jobs Watch's South West median was £40,000 from 11 ads; Midlands / West Midlands were £50,000 from four ads each. Low counts make these unstable.
Fully remote UK role	Do not assume remote automatically means lower pay	Remote vacancies compete nationally. Pay may be location-agnostic, or explicitly tied to candidate location; clarify the policy.
Hybrid / regular office attendance	Consider the size of the candidate catchment and commuting burden	A lower salary may be harder to sustain if the rota requires frequent office attendance or nights.

Shift Premiums, On-Call & Total Reward

For 24/7 MSSP operations, base salary alone can understate the real offer. Publish the rota and the pay mechanics early in the process.

Pay element	Suggested approach	What to clarify
Night / weekend / rotating shift allowance	Model separately from base salary; where practical, show a typical annualised total	Is it a fixed allowance, hourly enhancement, or percentage uplift? Does it vary by rota?
On-call payment	Set a clear standby payment plus defined call-out / overtime rules	Frequency, response expectations, minimum payment, TOIL and escalation responsibilities.
Overtime / additional shifts	Avoid relying on informal overtime to make the salary competitive	Is overtime paid, enhanced, or taken as TOIL? Is additional cover voluntary?
Bonus	Treat as variable, not guaranteed salary	Target, eligibility, historic payout and whether it is individual or company-wide.
Pension / healthcare / leave	Compare the full package, but do not use benefits to disguise a materially below-market base	Employer pension contribution, holiday allowance, training budget, certification support and wellbeing benefits.

One published July 2026 SOC salary guide suggests L1 shift premiums of around £1,500 – £3,000 annually in some environments. Treat this as an indicative reference, not a universal MSSP standard.

Skills & Factors That Move a Candidate Up the Band

The capabilities below are the ones most likely to justify an upper-band offer or a move into the next band. For each one, the right-hand column suggests how to test it at interview, so offers are based on evidence rather than job titles.

Capability	Salary implication	Evidence to test at interview
SIEM fluency (Microsoft Sentinel, Splunk, QRadar, Elastic)	Baseline for many L2 roles; deeper query skills support upper-band offers	Can they explain a query, correlate events and show how they would investigate an alert?
Incident response and scoping	Supports L2 / senior L2 positioning	Can they build a timeline, establish scope, recommend containment and document decisions?
Detection tuning / engineering	Can justify a premium over queue-based monitoring	Have they created or tuned rules, reduced false positives, mapped detections to ATT&CK or measured outcomes?
Threat hunting	Potential premium where hunting is a genuine part of the job	Can they describe a hypothesis-led hunt and the telemetry they would need?
SOAR / automation / scripting	Can move the role into specialist territory when applied in production	Examples using playbooks, APIs, KQL, Python or PowerShell to reduce manual handling.
Cloud and identity telemetry	Valuable in Microsoft-heavy and cloud-focused customer estates	Experience with Entra ID, M365, Defender, Azure activity and identity-led attack patterns.
Customer communication / multi-tenant service delivery	Important differentiator in MSSPs; may support upper end of the band	Can they explain technical findings clearly, manage expectations and write concise incident updates?
SC / DV clearance or eligibility	May increase access to specific roles and shorten mobilisation where clearance is already held	Confirm the exact clearance required and whether the employer can sponsor or transfer it. Never assume eligibility equals clearance.

Recruitment & Retention Recommendations

Salary is only part of the picture. These practical steps help MSSPs attract the right analysts at each level, and keep them once they're in the team.

If hiring L1 analysts

- Keep the job description realistic: distinguish genuine entry-level training from roles that expect independent incident judgement from day one.
- Advertise the shift pattern and annualised shift pay. Ambiguity around nights, weekends and rota fairness can cost candidates late in the process.
- Offer a defined training path: SIEM fundamentals, incident handling, customer communication and progression criteria into L2.

If hiring L2 and senior analysts

- Interview for investigations and reasoning, not just tool-name familiarity. Use a realistic alert scenario and assess how the candidate structures their investigation.
- Make customer exposure, incident ownership, escalation authority and detection responsibilities explicit. Senior candidates will compare the actual remit with the title and pay.
- If the role combines senior analysis, mentoring and shift leadership, benchmark the whole remit rather than splitting responsibilities across an underpriced "Senior SOC Analyst" title.

If retaining existing analysts

- Use a visible skills matrix and salary bands for L1 → L2 → Senior L2/L3 with clear promotion criteria.
- Review base and total pay separately: frequent nights or on-call can leave analysts feeling underpaid on a market-rate base.
- Check new-hire offers don't leave equally capable existing analysts paid noticeably less.
- Track attrition, exit reasons, time-to-proficiency and unnecessary escalations to see whether pay or training is the real issue.

Hiring Budget Examples

Illustrative base-pay planning only. Figures exclude employer National Insurance, pension, recruitment fees, equipment, training, shift payments and other benefits.

Hiring plan	Base salary assumption	Annual base payroll
3 × L1 analysts at £30,000	£30,000 each	£90,000
2 × L2 analysts at £41,000	£41,000 each	£82,000
1 × senior escalation analyst at £52,000	£52,000	£52,000
Example six-person cohort	**Mixed L1/L2/senior assumptions above**	**£224,000**

Methodology & Sources

Recommended bands are permanent base salaries for UK MSSP SOC roles as of October 2026, drawing on published UK salary data alongside Dynamic Search's experience of the market. They exclude bonus, shift allowance, on-call payments, pension, benefits and employer costs.

Sources:

- IT Jobs Watch, SOC Analyst UK job market data, six months to 19 October 2026
- Indeed, SOC Analyst salaries in the United Kingdom, updated 11 October 2026
- Published UK technology and SOC salary guides, 2026

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