



Salary Rates Report

Survey conducted between 06/2022 - 10/2022



SHE DREW THAT Report

Snapshot of Animation Professionals Salaries rates

DISCLAIMER: Data analysis was conducted by an experienced independent researcher, however, given the small sample size (less than 200) there is a need to interpret the survey findings with caution.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the survey

Following the sharing and discussion of the Animation & VFX union rates guide (<https://www.animvfxunion.com/payerates>) on She Drew That Socials in May 2022, some members were surprised to find that these recommended salary rates did not match with their own work experience.

Our survey set out to establish what people earned and their work role, seniority and industry sector to compare with the Animation & VFX union recommended salary rates and also what they think is a fair rate for them.

Aim

The main aim of this salary survey was to capture a snapshot of salary data reported by current animation professionals as a basis for further/future discussion and exploration.

The survey

The survey asked animation professionals information related to their salaries, the industry in which they work, and about their work role and seniority. Data collected over four months from June to October 2022 attracted a total of 171 UK based responses. A number of respondents were not included as they were based outside of the UK (i.e. outside England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Participants identified their day rate/annual salary, work role, seniority and the industry sector in which they work. Additional questions were included about demographics and locations to understand the profile of the participants in the survey. All these data have been used for analysis and the findings are summarised in this report.

The survey population

Participants identified themselves as female (73%), as male (20%) and as non-binary (12%), and were aged from 18-24 (11%), 25-34 (67%), 35-44 (18%), to 45-64 (4%). Their work experience ranged from less than a year to 39 years, with 61% located in London, 15% in southern England, 9% in northern England, 15% from the other nations of the UK and a small number from outside the UK.

Of the 171 UK responses, 70 identified their work role as 2D animator, 18 as 3D animators, 26 as Designers, 21 as Motion Designers and 15 as Directors. The remainder – a group of 21 - included a small number of Producers, Editors, Animator Leads, General Assistants, Modellers, Storyboard artists, Supervisors, AE animators, and Stop-motion animators.



Self-identified seniority ranged from Junior (18%), Mid (40%), Senior (27%), Lead (6%), Supervisor (4%) to Head of Department (5%). In regards of the industry sector, it is reported as Commercial (42%), Film/TV (34%), Direct to Client (10%), Mixture (9%) and Others (5%).

RESULTS

How much do you earn as a freelancer & full-time employee?

Table 1 & 2 below show the average and range of salaries reported by **Seniority**:

Table 1: Animation Freelancer Day Rate according to Seniority (n=171)			
	Lowest Day Rate	Average Day rate	Highest Day rate
Junior	125	169	215
Mid	100	256	350
Senior	130	297 [288**]	700* [400***]
Lead	250	338	450
Supervisor	170	310	380
Head of department	200	333	450
Please note: * Outliner (only one entry of this exceptionally high day rate of £700 was reported) ** Average salary after outliner is removed from the data set *** Highest salary after outliner is removed from the data set			

Table 2: Animation Professionals Annual Salary according to Seniority (n=171)			
	Lowest Annual salary	Average Annual salary	Highest Annual salary
Junior	20,000	25,827	35,000
Mid	21,000	32,768	46,000
Senior	28,000	43,417	85,000
Lead	30,000	39,921	59,000
Supervisor	35,000	48,667	56,000
Head of department	55,000	65,667	82,000

Table 3 & 4 show the average and range of salaries reported in relation to **Industry sector**:

Table 3: Animation Freelance Day Rate according to Industry sector (n=171) (total responses= 114)			
	Lowest Day Rate	Average Day rate	Highest Day Rate
Commercial	130	280	450
Film/TV	100	255 [247**]	700* [450***]
Direct to Client	250	314	400
Mixture	150	266	380
Others	200	256	350
Please note: * Outliner (only one entry of this exceptionally high day rate of £700 was reported) ** Average salary after outliner is removed from the data set *** Highest salary after outliner is removed from the data set			



Table 4: Animation Professionals Annual Salary according to Industry sector (n=171) (total responses = 81)			
	Lowest Annual salary	Average Annual salary	Highest Annual salary
Commercial	20,000.00	35,858	85,000.00
Film/TV	20,000.00	35,829	82,000.00
Direct to Client	22,000.00	30,000	45,000.00
Mixture	21,000.00	38,667	59,000.00
Others	25,000.00	29,400	36,000.00

Table 5 & 6 below show the average and range of salaries reported according to **work Role**:

Table 5: Animation Freelance Day Rate according to work Role (n=171) (total responses = 103)			
	Lowest Day Rate	Average Day rate	Highest Day Rate
2D Animator	130	256	375
3D Animator	125	275	350
Designer	140	296 [280**]	700* [350***]
Motion Designer	100	302	400
Director	215	340	450
Others			

Please note:
 *Outliner (only one entry of this exceptionally high day rate of £700 was reported)
 ** Average salary after outliner is removed from the data set
 *** Highest salary after outliner is removed from the data set

Table 6: Animation Professionals Annual Salary according to work Role (n=171) (total responses=69)			
	Lowest Annual salary	Average Annual salary	Highest Annual salary
2D Animator	22,000	33,000	46,000
3D Animator	20,000	39,400	59,000
Designer	20,000	30,000	42,000
Motion Designer	25,000	38,000	85,000
Director	30,000	51,800	82,000
Others			

What is the relationship between 'years of experience' and 'seniority' with salary rated reported in this survey?

Further analysis was done to examine the relationship between 'years of experience' and 'seniority' with salary rates reported in this survey.

- a) Number of years of work experience:



Correlation analysis shows that there is a positive relationship between 'Years of experience' to Day Rate ($r=0.15$) & Annual salary ($r=0.41$). The results suggest that the higher of number of years of experience the higher of the Day Rate and Annual Salary earned. The results also suggest that 'Years of experience' has a strong relationship for Annual Salary and a moderate relationship with Day Rate.

b) Seniority at work:

Correlation analysis shows that there is a positive relationship between 'Seniority' to Day Rate ($r=0.37$) and to Annual Salary ($r=0.67$). The results suggest that the higher the Seniority at work the higher of the salary earned in both Day rate and Annual salary. The results also suggest that the 'Seniority' has a very strong relationship with Annual salary and a moderate relationship with Day Rate.

How often have you been paid overtime and how much compared with your day rate?

Only 18% of respondents indicated that they were paid more than their day rate while 69% said they had never received overtime payments.

How frequently do you increase your day rate?

While 78% of respondents indicated that every year or couple of years say they increase their day rate, 12% of respondents indicate they never increase their day rate.

What do you think a fair day rate/monthly salary is for your level of experience?

Regarding thoughts on what is a fair Day Rate for their level of work experience, 14% indicated that they are satisfied with their current Day Rate, while 86% of respondents indicated they should have a higher rate. Salaried respondents indicated similar results – 82% indicated a higher rate while 10% were satisfied with their current annual salary. Interestingly, 5% indicated that they should earn lower than their current salary.

Conclusion:

Given the small sample size (less than 200) there is a need to interpret the results with caution. For example, outliers could potentially distort the findings and the average is a more robust guide to earnings. The survey does succeed in providing a snapshot of the current salary of animation professional and some interesting insights.

While the correlation analysis shows that both 'years of experience' and 'seniority' have a significant relationship with salary increases, 'seniority' has a higher impact on pay than 'years of service'. However, 'seniority' has a weaker relationship with pay increases for day rate respondents in comparison to salaried respondents.

In the seniority tables 1&2 the pattern of salary progression appears to be quite linear from Junior to Senior, however the salaries reported between Senior, Lead, Supervisor & Head of Department appears to be quite varied which might suggest that when considering a fair salary scale, the senior roles need clearer definitions and descriptions of roles and responsibility.



The results in tables 1-6 show useful information of the ranges and variations of both day rates and annual salaries of Freelancer and Full-time worker salary according to their 'seniority', 'industry sector' and 'work role' and these results warrant further exploration and discussion. Given the wide range and variation in the day rates and annual salary scales, it is important to consider a clearer definition of job role, seniority in regards of the type/size of responsibility and the sector of the industry it operates.

Recommendations:

1. To repeat survey for the next couple of years to gain a larger sample size for the review of the salary scales and the trend of the salary scales for the animation professionals in the UK. This will also allow us to create a more in-depth analysis.
2. Clearer links between pay and the responsibilities within a role may reduce the range of the pay rates offered to professionals in the animation industry.
3. More explicit career progression pathways, especially within senior roles, would help to clarify the pay structure in the animation industry.

Points of discussion:

- Location was included in the questionnaire; however, it became clear that physical location of respondents didn't necessarily reflect the location of their work. This leads us to question whether location is no longer relevant to the discussion of salaries or whether it is the location of the work rather than the person. Within the comments, we found that some also work for US companies, which enabled them to charge a different rate. We felt that this helped clarify the importance of location of work rather than physical location when reflecting on the salaries for the UK animation industry.
- From the analysis we see that there is a stronger correlation to pay increase when it comes to seniority, over 'years of experience', this leads us to believe it's important to not to base salary considerations on 'years of experience' alone, but also experience of the variety/type of roles, nature/size of responsibilities and the specific sector of industry in which they work.
- The high percentage of respondents claiming to never receive overtime brings to question whether overtime is relevant within the context of our industry, and whether more clarification is needed over what constitutes overtime. Within the comments we found that some respondents "overtime" was costed within an extension of the project.
- We noticed that although 78% of respondents indicated that every year or couple of years say they increase their day rate, 12% never increased their rate, we felt that it was important to underline this to establish the importance for people to review their rates annually.
- 86% of day rates respondents and 82% of annual salary respondents indicated they wished to receive a high rate. Although these are significant numbers it is expected, and from the tables, we can see that only two thirds of the day rates responded, and only half of the annual salaries responded. So, it becomes only 40% wanting a higher day rate. This sample is too small a sample, with too many variables, to make any claim that there is evidence that overall people feel their rates are unfair for their level of experience.

