

# Human Resources & Corporate Services Salary Survey & Guide Hong Kong 2016





## INTRODUCTION

Aquis Search is delighted to present our annual Human Resources & Corporate Services Salary Survey for Hong Kong 2016.

Our aim in producing these surveys is to provide guidance to clients and candidates on current compensation levels post end of year reviews and predict how the market will develop. Our information has been researched and collated with the help of our clients and candidates and from our knowledge of the marketplace.

As with all surveys, the ranges represent the mainstream view and there will be individual situations that fall outside the range published here. Please use this survey as a guide and do not hesitate to call for further clarification on the compensation trends in the market.



## INTRODUCTION

The Human Resources & Corporate Services team offers a wide range of services to clients seeking to fill permanent, contract and interim jobs in the following areas:

- Human Resources
- Company Secretarial
- Paralegals and Legal Secretaries
- Business Development and Marketing Professionals in Law Firms
- Administration and Secretaries

At Aquis Search our Human Resources & Corporate Services desk understands that support functions are an integral part of our clients' infrastructure and we continually strive to ensure the success of the industries we serve. We work on both temporary and permanent roles with our clients in the leading law firms, traditional industries and financial services sector throughout Asia.

## PARALEGAL

Our clients across the private practice, financial institutions and the wider commerce market all have supporting staff including paralegals and legal executives for fee-earners in a wide range of legal matters and procedures.

In private practice, paralegals under corporate teams with a PRC background remain in high demand. Candidates who possess strong Mandarin and English skills have been, and continue to be, particularly valued due to market expansion in China. There was notable demand for paralegals supporting M&A work during the last two quarters of 2015, which is expected to continue throughout 2016. Most law firms are competing for candidates with 2-3 years' experience.

In the commerce market, we have noted a substantial increase in clients requiring mid-level in-house paralegals and legal executives, particularly those with 4-6 years' experience. Sectors such as telecommunications and consumer retail have engaged more aggressive hiring activities by adding new headcount. We expect this to continue as we move towards the second half of 2016.

## OFFICE SUPPORT

### **Legal Executive and Secretary**

In 2015 most legal secretary or secretary openings were replacement positions. We noted steady levels of hiring activity for junior to mid-level secretaries, supporting partners in daily administrative work and handling tight meeting schedules.

Hiring within the financial sector slowed down last year as we saw a budget control over office support staff. Markets that have been contracting are expected to expand as some firms struggle to secure permanent headcount. This has created more opportunities for candidates who have been out of the market for a while. We have also seen cross-industry moves, where candidates have left the financial sector in favour of the general commercial market. Secretaries with proficiency in Mandarin are highly sought after as Hong Kong based businesses continue their expansion into China.

## LEGAL SUPPORT

### Business Development

With business development activities being centralised in Hong Kong and law firms expanding offices in the Greater China region, business development candidates have been particularly coveted, and competition for their skill set is fierce. Being the hub and originating point of business, law firms in Hong Kong are expanding their business development teams by making junior and mid-level hires whilst trying to retain seasoned professionals. To cope with business expansion, international law firms are also adding new headcount in their Shanghai and Beijing offices where legal professionals are in demand. This has created opportunities for candidates from other professional firms to gain exposure in the legal industry with new headcount often coming from the commerce and financial sectors.

## COMPANY SECRETARY

Mid-level company secretary openings in 2015 were mostly seen in the finance industry and in listed companies, a trend we expect to continue this year.

In private companies and law firms, we have seen less movement in the company secretary space, primarily because candidates are relatively stable and most companies don't require a large team supporting this function. Candidates from the private sector are also more reluctant to join listed companies due to the perceived heavier workload and longer working hours. Within these companies, the company secretary function is often under the remit of the legal department.

We have seen a few company secretary openings in major listed companies, but most are replacement roles. Usually candidates move around companies that are of similar nature, for example, real estate to property development and investment. Moving forward, we expect more company secretary openings in Chinese based companies or Chinese listed companies, where there is a need for professionals to undertake more stringent and increasingly prolific regulatory review and monitoring functions. Some companies may also require company secretaries possessing legal qualifications, where they can double hat in other legal functions. Professional qualifications are necessary for these positions, where most senior candidates are either chartered or members of HKICS.

## HUMAN RESOURCES

2015 was a volatile year for mid-level human resources professionals. This has been consistent across industries in the legal and financial sectors. In the financial sectors, we have seen a significant demand in talent management and business partner functions. Financial institutions, especially the insurance companies, have understood that there is a greater need to attract and retain quality employees in order to maintain their competitive edge in the market. People retention has become a significant remit for those undertaking human resources functions. Most companies have been adopting the Business Partner approach over the past few years, where experienced human resources candidates are needed for strategic hiring and to advise on retention programs. This is more prominent within insurance companies as well as retail and commercial banks, where there is higher turnover among front office staff.

Human resources hiring within law firms has been mostly replacement roles. Junior candidates are now able to pick up a wider scope and range of duties due to the more pronounced regional expansion of UK and US firms. For mid to senior level candidates, we have witnessed a trend of candidates moving from the financial sector into law firms.

The HR discipline has long been a female-orientated profession and women account for the majority of its workforce. As a result we continue to see contract positions become available mainly due to maternity cover, although there is also a steady rise in the fixed term and interim management market in Asia in general.

## SALARY SCALES

As we move through 2016, we predict salaries will remain in line with levels seen in 2015 for the majority of human resources and support staff. We anticipate salary increments will be between 5% and 8% internally and we expect to see market rates of between 10% and 15% for a lateral move. Company secretaries are likely to see more generous salary increments of 15% to 20%. Bonuses are expected to be flat for 2016 and will continue to lie between 1 and 3 months.

## HUMAN RESOURCES PROFESSIONALS

HR Generalist	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
HR Officer/ Assistant	1-3	140K-260K
HR Associate/ Assistant Manager	4-6	300K-420K
HR Manager	7-10	420K-900K
HR Director/ Head	11+	960K+

HR Specialist	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
Learning & Development Assistant/ Officer	1-3	160K-200K
Assistant Learning & Development Manager	4-6	230K-280K
Learning & Development Manager	7-9	400K-600K
(Regional) Head of Learning & Development	10+	700K+
Compensation and Benefits Assistant/ Officer	1-3	150K-200K

HR Specialist	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
Assistant Compensation and Benefits Manager	4-6	230K-280K
Compensation and Benefits Manager	7-9	540K-690K
(Regional) Head of Compensation and Benefits	10+	720K+
Recruitment Specialist/ In-House Recruiter (junior level)	1-4	180K-360K
Talent Acquisition Specialist (Mid Level)	5+	420K+
HR Business Partner	7-10	600K-810K
Head of Talent Acquisition	10+	1Mn+

## LEGAL SUPPORT/ PARALEGAL (WITH LEGAL QUALIFICATION)

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
Junior Paralegal	1-3	130K-340K
Paralegal/ Legal Executive	4-8	360K-650K
Senior Paralegal	9+	680K+

## LEGAL SUPPORT (WITHOUT LEGAL QUALIFICATION)

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
Junior Legal Executive/ Junior Legal Secretary	1-3	120K-220K
Legal Executive/ Legal Secretary	4-7	240K-320K
Senior Legal Executive / Senior Legal Secretary	8+	360K-600K

## BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT (PRIVATE PRACTICE)

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
<b>BD Executive/Coordinator</b>	1-4	220K-480K
<b>BD Manager</b>	5-10	460K-760K
<b>Head of BD</b>	11+	1Mn+

## COMPANY SECRETARY

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
<b>Company Secretarial Officer</b>	1-4	220K-480K
<b>Assistant Company Secretary</b>	5-10	460K-760K
<b>Company Secretary</b>	11+	1Mn+

## IN-HOUSE LEGAL SUPPORT (WITH LEGAL QUALIFICATION)

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
<b>Junior Legal Secretary/ Junior Paralegal</b>	2-4	160K-240K
<b>Legal Secretary/ Paralegal</b>	5-7	320K-520K
<b>Senior Legal Secretary/ Senior Paralegal</b>	8+	540K+

## IN-HOUSE CORPORATE SUPPORT (WITHOUT LEGAL QUALIFICATION)

Position	Years of Experience	Annual Salary (HKD)
<b>Administrator</b>	1-5	120K-240K
<b>Assistant Office Manager</b>	2-5	230K-340K
<b>Office Manager</b>	6-10	420K-800K
<b>Secretary/ Executive Assistant (junior)</b>	1-3	140K-220K
<b>Secretary/ Executive Assistant (Mid Level)</b>	4-8	240K-500K
<b>Secretary/ Executive Assistant (Senior)</b>	9+	500K+

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Toni is a Senior Consultant in the HR & Corporate Services team based in Hong Kong, covering Human Resources, Business Development, Marketing & Communication, Paralegal, Executive Secretary and Company Secretarial roles. Toni works with a variety of clients including Commerce, Financial Services and Private Practice Law Firms. She initially joined Aquis Search in the Risk & Compliance team covering Corporate Banking and Asset Management.

Prior to joining Aquis Search, Toni was with a Singaporean-based executive search firm and her primary focus was recruiting for the Sales & Marketing functions across corporates and financial institutions.

She has a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Southern California and is fluent in Cantonese, Mandarin and English.



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Jessie is a Consultant in the Human Resources & Corporate Services team based in Hong Kong. She specialises in the recruitment of Human Resources, Business Development, Paralegal, Executive Secretary and Company Secretarial roles. She works with clients from multiple industries including Private Practice Law firms, In-house Commerce and Financial institutions.

Prior to joining Aquis Search, Jessie worked with an Asia-based Insurance company. She has a Bachelor's degree in Human Genetics from the University College, London. She speaks English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

## ABOUT AQUIS SEARCH

Aquis Search is a leading regional Executive Search firm specialising in the finance & accounting, human resources & corporate services, investment management, legal and risk & compliance sectors across Asia. We offer clients executive search, research & advisory, search & selection and contract & payroll services.

Our clients are members of a global network of prestigious financial institutions, leading UK and US law firms, regional market leaders and Fortune 500 organisations. Clients' recruitment briefs are successfully met by our team of experienced, multilingual Consultants. Professional integrity is the key value on which our client relationships are built and the majority of our business is from personal referral. This is a testament to the high level of professionalism for which we are known.

Aquis Search was established in Hong Kong in 2009. Today we operate offices in Beijing, Delhi, Hong Kong, London, Mumbai, Shanghai, Singapore and Taipei.

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