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United Arab Emirates Salary Survey **2008**



WELCOME

Welcome to the Naiman Clarke United Arab Emirates Salary Report for 2008. This year has been an interesting one for legal recruitment in the Middle East region: the beginning of 2008 saw an increase in the demand for lawyers in the region and most international firms stepped up recruitment significantly during that time, with a steady demand for lawyers already on the ground as well as lawyers sourced from the UK, Australia and New Zealand. By mid-year recruitment of lawyers from external sources peaked, as most of the international firms in the UAE began to look internally to source candidates from among their international network of offices.

Over the last few months, many of the international firms have slowed down or halted recruitment and have opted to monitor the economy internationally and its likely effects on clients and the levels of work flowing on to law firms in the Middle East region. It is widely expected that recruitment will pick up again in early 2009.

This time of economic slow-down will no doubt affect the salaries paid to lawyers of all levels in the Middle East region. Over the past few years, with demand for high-quality, experienced lawyers far surpassing supply, law firms were sometimes forced to pay rates that were well above 'market rates' in order to secure their preferred candidates. This time of global economic uncertainty will provide law firms in the UAE with the opportunity to put in place more concrete salary bandings for each PQE level and this will lead to greater certainty and predictability in the recruitment process as a whole.

This survey aims to present an up-to-date snapshot of the salaries currently being paid to lawyers of varying PQE levels and we hope that this will assist law firms when planning recruitment strategies and setting salary bandings for the year ahead. Thank you to all firms who participated in this year's Salary Survey. Naiman Clarke look forward to working further with you all in the 2009 - 2010 financial year.

Jennifer Lee | Senior Consultant
Naiman Clarke Legal

INTRODUCTION

The present salary survey reports a wide range of salaries and additional benefits offered by the leading UK firms operating in the UAE. Whilst the report shows a wide range of salaries at most PQE levels, increasing with seniority, it is also easy to distinguish what we would call clear 'market' rates at each PQE level. Candidates are increasingly savvy users of legal guides and salary surveys, and will usually have a very strong idea of 'market rates' before they begin the interview process.

It was determined that at some senior levels, salaries differ by as much as AED76,000 / month, with lawyers who are bringing in new clients or winning business being rewarded well above their peers in salary as well as bonuses. All of the surveyed firms offer additional performance bonuses at an average of 5 to 45% of a lawyer's annual salary. In some cases, bonuses are offered at a fixed amount as opposed to a percentage of salary. In calculating bonuses, firms will take into account recorded billable hours (on average between 1,400- 1,700 annually), marketing initiatives, overall contribution and appraisal ratings.

Average 2-3 Year
Lawyer's Salary
AED47,000 / month

In relation to fringe benefits, the salary survey shows that all of the surveyed law firms offer their employees health insurance, while paid study and paid study leave appear to be an incentive that is practiced among 60% of law firms. Other popular perks adopted across the UAE include the payment of professional memberships, opportunities for secondments, and professional training programmes. Some perks are also made available to certain groups of employees, such as parking availability, travel benefits, and laptops and Blackberrys that are reserved solely for qualified lawyers and senior management.

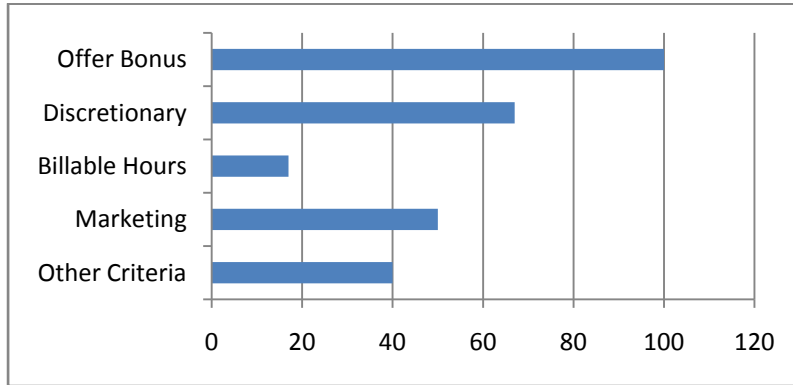
Firms offering
Performance based
Bonuses

100%

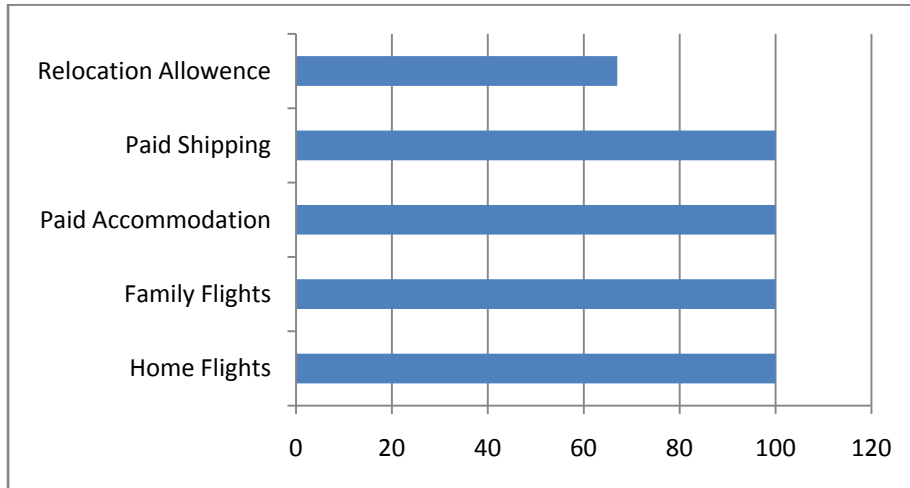
Relocation packages are available at 100% of surveyed law firms, all of which include flights for the candidate and the candidate's immediate family. Paid accommodation is also standard among law firms, the duration of which ranges from two to four weeks. The shipping of personal effects was offered by 100% of firms and 60% of participating firms offered a 'settling-in' allowance, which ranges from 16,000 – 35,000 AED.

BONUSES + OTHER BENEFITS

2.0 BONUSES



3.0 RELOCATION



In terms of the scope of salaries within firms, the table below indicates that most law firms tend to follow set patterns or pay scales for the payment of lawyers at increasing levels of PQE. Interesting, the mean salary offered to lawyers at the 3-4 PQE mark was recorded as greater than the mean salary offered to lawyers at the more senior 4-5 PQE band, perhaps reflecting the widespread shortage of lawyers at the 3-4 PQE level across the Middle East region.

Statistical Information

Level	Mean (AED '000)	Min (AED '000)	Max (AED '000)	Range (AED '000)
Trainee 1st Year	22	18	29	11
Trainee 2nd Year	25	20	32	11
Newly Qualified	37	30	42	12
0-1 yrs	39	31	45	14
1-2 yrs	42	33	55	21
2-3 yrs	47	35	58	23
3-4 yrs	59	53	65	11
4-5 yrs	53	41	67	26
5-6 yrs	56	44	69	25
6-7 yrs	57	44	73	29
7-8 yrs	67	52	77	25
8+ yrs	68	46	122	76