



NZ Employment Market Report 2021

Accounting and Finance

Accounting & Finance

The Market

New Zealand has experienced a period of relative stability so far in 2021, and business confidence has tentatively increased. This confidence has been driven in part by increased local economic activity, triggered by organisations engaging New Zealand-based suppliers for products and materials previously sourced overseas.

Despite this, a degree of uncertainty remains, prompting many organisations to review budgets and forecasts to reduce overhead expenses. In some cases, this has led to downsizing, and business closures. In contrast, there are organisations that have recovered faster than anticipated. After being pressed to make redundancies, they are actively hiring only six months later.

Faced with supply chain disruptions and resulting costs, many organisations have had to think creatively in order to cut expenditure and adapt to the new normal. This initial reduction in people resource was followed by an increase in market confidence and business activity, which prompted a demand for temporary and fixed-term accounts talent.

Junior Accounting and Finance positions, including Accounts Administrators and Assistants, have been most significantly impacted, with businesses moving to integrate these roles with other already existing jobs – resulting in hybrid positions requiring a varied and broad skill set. With the increase in hybrid roles, we saw some organisations recruiting Assistant Accountants to perform Management Accountant functions. These lower-tier, hybrid roles also encompass a heavy admin component, which may explain why Assistant Accountants had the biggest range in salary expectations, between \$60k-\$80k.

Sourcing talent for these roles has been challenging, with candidates requiring a combination of skill sets and experience to meet the expectations of the role.

In situations where workloads have increased because of restructuring, a number of new hires have been required to 'hit the ground running' with little or no training, which has had an impact on organisational culture. In this environment, a candidate's skills, knowledge and experience are integral to their success. However, due to the workload and lack of understanding of internal processes and procedures, we have noticed a higher than usual number of employees experiencing 'burn out', and consequently there is the potential for longer-term employee retention to be impacted.

- ROLES IN DEMAND -



- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable and Payroll
- Financial Analysts and Financial Accountants
- Chartered Accountants

With persisting global uncertainty, we have seen fewer highly skilled professionals moving jobs. As expected, there has also been an influx of expat New Zealand Accounting and Finance professionals returning to New Zealand in need of employment. Although the number of applications has increased in the Accounting and Finance sector, the increase is not significant - especially for skilled candidates. As a result, we still find ourselves in a market with skill shortages and we have seen many businesses 'shoulder tapping' candidates to secure the best talent.

The increase of living wage in September 2020 to \$22.10 saw organisations that could, increase their hourly rates to remain competitive. Organisations that are performing well in this environment are also offering salary rises to retain top talent. Salaries increased notably in the mid-to-senior level, specifically for qualified Accountants. Organisations that are struggling, are understandably prioritising their financial recovery. This has led to salaries remaining stagnant for many lower-level roles.

We expect to see an increase in hourly rates and salaries for hybrid, and hard-to-fill roles in the year ahead, as organisations compete for the best available talent.

- SOUGHT AFTER SKILLS -



Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP)



Big Data Analysis



Advanced Excel

- SOUGHT AFTER SOFT-SKILLS -



Analytical Thinking

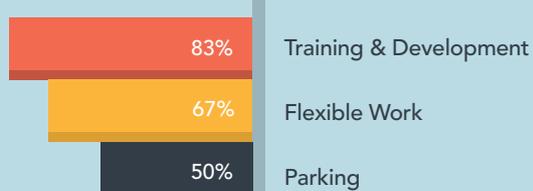


Communication



Adaptability

- TOP 3 BENEFITS PROVIDED -



Accounting & Finance Salary Guide

2020/21 RANGE IN NZD \$'000S

ROLE	AUCKLAND		WAIKATO / BOP		WELLINGTON		CHRISTCHURCH	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Chief Financial Officer	190	325	170	200	160	300	120	180
Financial Controller	135	190	130	150	130	200	120	170
Commercial Manager	130	200	120	140	130	200	120	160
Finance Manager	130	160	110	130	130	180	105	130
Payroll Manager	95	160	85	95	100	150	95	125
Financial Accountant	100	130	100	110	90	130	90	130
Management Accountant	100	130	100	110	90	130	85	125
Tax Accountant	90	120	85	95	100	150	90	120
Credit Manager	80	120	85	95	80	120	80	120
Financial Analyst	100	115	80	100	90	120	85	120
Accounts Receivable Team Leader	80	90	70	80	80	90	65	80
Billings Operations Team Leader	80	90	70	80	80	90	65	75
Payroll Officer	80	90	65	75	70	90	65	75
Assistant Accountant	70	80	65	75	65	80	65	75
Credit Controller	65	80	60	70	65	80	55	65
Payroll Administrator	62	75	55	65	60	70	52	70
Accounts Payable	58	65	52	57	55	65	50	60
Accounts Receivable	55	65	52	57	55	65	52	57
Accounts Assistant	55	65	47	52	50	65	45	58
Finance Assistant	50	65	47	52	50	65	50	60

Accounting and Finance

Employers

With the mental health challenges associated with operating through alert levels, a number of organisations are offering wellbeing bonuses each quarter as part of their candidate retention strategy. These include cash bonuses and/or paid leave.

These initiatives are vital for the wellbeing of employees in the Accounting and Finance sector, and help to create a resilient and future-ready workforce.

Candidates

There has been a shift in candidate preference towards permanent employment, with the number of candidates expressing their desire for permanent roles equal to those looking for temporary and contract work. This is in part due to the need for job security and long-term stability, not to mention that a fixed income is easier to prove when purchasing a house or applying for a credit card. Even within the temp space, candidates are more likely to take on a longer-term assignment, rather than a short-term contract.

Offering benefits and perks that are over and above the normal has become increasingly important in this climate. Incentives such as insurance subsidies, gym memberships and free fruit are now more common than not. Organisations that want to attract the best candidates in the market will need to clearly articulate their value proposition when advertising a role. Consider offering training and development opportunities, assignments or secondment opportunities, and even a modified work week in order to stand out in the market.

Job security still remains the number one priority for a number of candidates. Many are hesitant to move from their current role, even if they are not entirely satisfied.

- MADISON RECOMMENDS -

- **Employers** - Look at offering additional benefits to attract talent. Group insurance discounts, mental health days, purchasing discounts as well as progression opportunities will be highly sought after. If your organisation has a story to share around stability (confirmed future projects, length of time in business), ensure you communicate it.
- **Job Seekers** - Do your due diligence. Recruitment is a two-way process so research the organisation and the culture when you are thinking about an opportunity. If you know people that work there already, talk to them. Pick the right employer and back yourself to take a new job. Remember to continue to develop your skills, despite the uncertainty around.



The Year Ahead

We expect that the Accounting and Finance sector will continue to experience a skill shortage as ongoing border restrictions affect skilled migrants entering the New Zealand workforce, with businesses looking for talent who have combined skills of other, previously separate roles. This will especially be seen in the smaller to mid-tier organisations.

We also expect to see an increase in hourly rate and salaries for hybrid, and hard-to-fill roles in the year ahead, as organisations compete for the best available talent.

With an upsurge in demand for flexible working hours, and more organisations showing a willingness to accommodate working-from-home scenarios, we anticipate more people returning to the workforce who would otherwise find the traditional 9-to-5 city-based employment too restrictive. These may include parents, caregivers, those with certain medical conditions, and other individuals seeking specific part-time hours to fit around their lifestyle.

Although helping to alleviate the skill shortage, given the new and diverse skill sets required to fill hybrid roles, this new talent pool will require on-going training and may not fill the 'hit the ground running' requirements of many businesses.

EMPLOYERS LOOK FOR	CANDIDATES LOOK FOR
Candidates with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Experience • Qualifications • Technical Skills • Culture Fit 	Opportunities with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stability • Great Company Culture • Career Progression • Salary