



**Montagu Group**  
THE HUMAN CONNECTION

● IT & DIGITAL SALARY GUIDE · FY2026

# Know Your Worth.

Australia's technology talent market has never been more competitive. This guide gives QLD and SEQ businesses and the professionals who power them, the real numbers, honest insights and practical strategies to navigate it.

QLD / SEQ Focus

Australia Wide Data

Permanent Roles

FY2026 Benchmarks

**960K+**

TECH PROFESSIONALS  
NATIONALLY

**70%**

ICT ROLES IN  
SHORTAGE

**7–11%**

SALARY GROWTH  
YOY

**339K**

OPEN VACANCIES  
NATIONALLY

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# South East Queensland is redefining the national tech talent conversation

\$100K+

Average Brisbane tech salary, up from \$90K in FY24

2,026

Avg. weekly earnings QLD. Tech workers sit well above this

Brisbane

Now the 3rd largest tech market nationally by job vacancy volume

2032

Olympic Games investment accelerating Queensland's digital infrastructure build

01 · THE STATE OF PLAY

## The market isn't correcting. It's accelerating.

Three years ago, headlines warned of a tech talent correction. They were wrong. Supply constraints have deepened across Australia. Here in SEQ, a confluence of infrastructure investment, interstate migration and digital transformation has created one of the most active regional tech markets in the country's history.

### SEQ's moment has arrived

Queensland's technology sector is no longer a footnote to Sydney and Melbourne. Brisbane has emerged as a genuine tier one tech market, driven by sustained population growth, the 2032 Olympic digital infrastructure pipeline, state government tech uplift programs and a wave of companies choosing SEQ as their operational home. **Tech job vacancies in QLD grew faster than any other state in the past 12 months.**

The Sunshine Coast is following suit. Once considered a lifestyle first market with limited career depth, the Sunshine Coast is now attracting remote first tech employers, digital agencies and health tech companies at pace. Salary expectations in the region have closed the gap to Brisbane significantly, particularly at the senior and specialist levels.

"The professionals who would have relocated to Sydney from Queensland for their career, are now building it here in QLD. That changes the playing field for QLD employers."

MONTAGU GROUP, QLD MARKET OBSERVATION, 2026

### The national picture reinforces the local reality

**68% of ICT occupations are listed in shortage** by Jobs and Skills Australia. That figure has barely moved in three years and there's no structural pipeline capable of resolving it domestically. Skilled migration, remote first hiring and salary growth are the market's response mechanisms and all three are operating simultaneously in QLD.

AI is reshaping demand without reducing it. Junior roles face pressure from automation; senior, architectural and AI specialist roles are commanding premiums that were unthinkable 24 months ago. Counter offers are now reflexive. Salary benchmarking is now continuous, not annual. And candidates, backed by real data, are negotiating harder than ever.

EMPLOYMENT TO POPULATION RATIO

65.1%

Near record highs across Australia, sustaining wage pressure in all sectors

ABS LABOUR FORCE, MAY 2026

MEDIAN SALARY INCREASE

5.8%

All industries. Tech sits at 7–11%, more than double the national median

AVERAGE WEEKLY EARNINGS (NATIONAL)

\$2,063

Tech professionals earn significantly above this benchmark at every seniority level

WHAT'S DRIVING QLD SALARIES

→ Interstate migration bringing NSW/VIC salary expectations

→ 2032 Olympic digital infrastructure investment

→ Healthcare & MedTech growth in SEQ corridor

→ State government ICT uplift programs

→ Remote first employers competing for QLD talent globally

# Six roles dominating the 2026 hiring conversation

These aren't just popular. They're the roles where demand has outstripped supply most sharply, salary ranges are widening fastest and skilled professionals hold the most leverage. All figures reflect the national market; QLD/SEQ specifics noted where they differ.

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div>ROLE 01</div> <div>HIGHEST DEMAND</div> <div>Cloud Architect</div> <div>\$140K – \$240K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>Enterprise cloud migration is years from complete. Multi cloud architects with AWS, Azure and GCP depth are receiving unsolicited approaches weekly. In Brisbane, this role has seen 22% salary movement since FY24.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYEXTREME</div>                                                                                     | <div>ROLE 02</div> <div>REGULATORY SURGE</div> <div>Security Architect / CISO</div> <div>\$150K – \$385K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>Mandatory cybersecurity frameworks and a surge in high profile breaches have made security leadership a board level priority. The CISO has permanently moved from IT to executive and remuneration reflects it. QLD healthcare and resources sectors are particularly active.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYEXTREME</div>      | <div>ROLE 03</div> <div>AI DRIVEN CATEGORY</div> <div>Data Scientist / AI Specialist</div> <div>\$110K – \$195K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>Applied AI, not academic, is what the market wants. Professionals who can build production grade ML systems and translate outcomes for non technical stakeholders are almost impossible to find. SEQ's universities are producing graduates; employers are competing for the 5% with production experience.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYVERY HIGH</div> |
| <div>ROLE 04</div> <div>INFRASTRUCTURE BACKBONE</div> <div>DevOps / Platform Engineer</div> <div>\$110K – \$195K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>The role that makes everything else possible. Strong DevOps engineers, especially those with IaC, GitOps and platform engineering experience, consistently receive competing offers during any active search. Brisbane salary movement for this role is tracking 8% ahead of FY25.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYVERY HIGH</div> | <div>ROLE 05</div> <div>HYBRID PREMIUM</div> <div>Enterprise / Solution Architect</div> <div>\$150K – \$240K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>Translating between technical depth and business strategy is genuinely rare. Architects who speak both languages and who have survived a large scale transformation are in relentless demand. This is one of the fastest growing roles in QLD's government and utilities sectors.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYHIGH</div> | <div>ROLE 06</div> <div>FASTEST EMERGING</div> <div>GRC / IAM Consultant</div> <div>\$80K – \$185K</div> <div>NATIONAL · PERMANENT</div> <div>Governance, Risk and Compliance is no longer a backwater. It's a boardroom conversation. New government mandates and insurance requirements mean every mid to large organisation needs credentialed GRC and identity specialists. The Sunshine Coast's growing professional services sector is feeling this keenly.</div> <div>DEMAND INTENSITYHIGH</div>           |

# What a tech career earns across its arc

Illustrative salary trajectory for a software engineering path, Australia's most common technology discipline. Figures represent base salary, excluding superannuation, in the Brisbane/SEQ market. National variations are noted in the salary tables section.



# The numbers, by discipline

Base annual salary (AUD, excluding superannuation). Brisbane/QLD floor and ceiling shown alongside Sunshine Coast, NSW, VIC, ACT and WA ranges for direct comparison. All figures reflect FY2026 market conditions with ~7% adjustment from FY25 benchmarks.

## IT Infrastructure15 ROLES

| ROLE                     | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           | WA            |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Desktop Support L1       | \$65K     | \$80K       | \$60K–\$75K   | \$65K–\$80K   | \$65K–\$80K   | \$65K–\$80K   | \$65K–\$75K   |
| Desktop Support L2       | \$75K     | \$85K       | \$65K–\$85K   | \$65K–\$85K   | \$80K–\$100K  | \$80K–\$110K  | \$75K–\$90K   |
| Application Support      | \$75K     | \$115K      | \$65K–\$105K  | \$65K–\$100K  | \$75K–\$130K  | \$85K–\$135K  | \$80K–\$125K  |
| Service Desk Team Lead   | \$90K     | \$130K      | \$75K–\$110K  | \$85K–\$130K  | \$80K–\$130K  | \$80K–\$110K  | \$85K–\$115K  |
| Service Desk Manager     | \$115K    | \$135K      | \$115K–\$135K | \$110K–\$130K | \$115K–\$130K | \$110K–\$125K | \$110K–\$135K |
| Database Administrator   | \$85K     | \$125K      | \$65K–\$115K  | \$90K–\$135K  | \$85K–\$150K  | \$90K–\$130K  | \$80K–\$140K  |
| Systems Administrator    | \$85K     | \$125K      | \$70K–\$110K  | \$100K–\$120K | \$85K–\$130K  | \$105K–\$140K | \$90K–\$135K  |
| Systems Engineer         | \$110K    | \$150K      | \$80K–\$125K  | \$105K–\$150K | \$110K–\$145K | \$135K–\$165K | \$85K–\$135K  |
| Network Administrator    | \$75K     | \$130K      | \$75K–\$115K  | \$70K–\$150K  | \$80K–\$120K  | \$100K–\$125K | \$85K–\$130K  |
| Network Engineer         | \$110K    | \$130K      | \$110K–\$125K | \$110K–\$150K | \$85K–\$150K  | \$115K–\$150K | \$75K–\$150K  |
| Network Architect        | \$125K    | \$160K      | \$110K–\$155K | \$125K–\$160K | \$125K–\$220K | \$175K–\$210K | \$135K–\$185K |
| Infrastructure Architect | \$145K    | \$180K      | \$135K–\$175K | \$140K–\$180K | \$135K–\$180K | \$145K–\$210K | \$110K–\$180K |
| Infrastructure Manager   | \$125K    | \$175K      | \$100K–\$145K | \$120K–\$180K | \$145K–\$240K | \$135K–\$190K | \$160K–\$205K |
| Service Delivery Manager | \$115K    | \$160K      | \$100K–\$155K | \$120K–\$165K | \$110K–\$165K | \$125K–\$190K | \$100K–\$155K |
| IT Manager               | \$125K    | \$180K      | \$110K–\$150K | \$115K–\$195K | \$135K–\$195K | \$150K–\$210K | \$125K–\$195K |



Cloud & Platform

7 ROLES · HIGHEST SALARY GROWTH

| ROLE                      | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           | WA            |
|---------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| DevOps Engineer           | \$110K    | \$165K      | \$100K–\$150K | \$110K–\$175K | \$110K–\$175K | \$125K–\$170K | \$105K–\$160K |
| Platform Engineer         | \$125K    | \$185K      | \$115K–\$165K | \$130K–\$195K | \$130K–\$195K | \$145K–\$190K | \$120K–\$180K |
| Platform Manager          | \$135K    | \$160K      | \$125K–\$150K | \$140K–\$170K | \$140K–\$175K | \$150K–\$175K | \$130K–\$165K |
| Site Reliability Engineer | \$135K    | \$150K      | \$125K–\$150K | \$140K–\$160K | \$135K–\$165K | \$145K–\$160K | \$130K–\$155K |
| Cloud Engineer            | \$120K    | \$175K      | \$110K–\$160K | \$125K–\$185K | \$120K–\$185K | \$135K–\$175K | \$115K–\$170K |
| Cloud Architect           | \$140K    | \$195K      | \$130K–\$185K | \$150K–\$205K | \$145K–\$210K | \$160K–\$200K | \$135K–\$190K |
| CTO                       | \$240K    | \$385K      | \$195K–\$315K | \$250K–\$395K | \$260K–\$415K | \$235K–\$360K | \$225K–\$370K |

Cyber Security

8 ROLES · FASTEST YOY GROWTH

| ROLE                           | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           | WA            |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Security Analyst               | \$110K    | \$150K      | \$100K–\$140K | \$115K–\$155K | \$110K–\$160K | \$125K–\$165K | \$110K–\$150K |
| Security Engineer              | \$115K    | \$175K      | \$110K–\$155K | \$120K–\$180K | \$115K–\$185K | \$135K–\$190K | \$110K–\$170K |
| IAM Engineer                   | \$100K    | \$175K      | \$90K–\$155K  | \$105K–\$180K | \$100K–\$185K | \$115K–\$195K | \$95K–\$170K  |
| GRC Consultant                 | \$125K    | \$175K      | \$110K–\$155K | \$130K–\$180K | \$125K–\$185K | \$145K–\$195K | \$115K–\$170K |
| Threat Intelligence Specialist | \$125K    | \$165K      | \$110K–\$150K | \$130K–\$170K | \$125K–\$175K | \$150K–\$195K | \$115K–\$160K |
| Security Architect             | \$135K    | \$210K      | \$125K–\$195K | \$140K–\$215K | \$135K–\$220K | \$155K–\$235K | \$130K–\$200K |
| Security Manager               | \$145K    | \$210K      | \$130K–\$195K | \$150K–\$215K | \$145K–\$220K | \$165K–\$235K | \$135K–\$200K |
| CISO                           | \$185K    | \$385K      | \$170K–\$350K | \$190K–\$395K | \$195K–\$405K | \$205K–\$415K | \$180K–\$370K |



Data & Analytics

6 ROLES

| ROLE                             | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           | WA            |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Data Analyst / Sr Data Analyst   | \$100K    | \$135K      | \$85K–\$120K  | \$105K–\$140K | \$100K–\$145K | \$110K–\$150K | \$95K–\$130K  |
| BI Developer                     | \$115K    | \$145K      | \$105K–\$130K | \$120K–\$150K | \$115K–\$150K | \$125K–\$155K | \$110K–\$140K |
| Data Engineer / Sr Data Engineer | \$110K    | \$175K      | \$95K–\$155K  | \$110K–\$180K | \$110K–\$185K | \$120K–\$195K | \$100K–\$170K |
| Data Modeller                    | \$110K    | \$150K      | \$95K–\$135K  | \$110K–\$150K | \$110K–\$155K | \$115K–\$160K | \$100K–\$145K |
| Data Scientist                   | \$110K    | \$195K      | \$100K–\$175K | \$115K–\$195K | \$110K–\$200K | \$130K–\$210K | \$105K–\$185K |
| Data Architect                   | \$135K    | \$185K      | \$120K–\$170K | \$140K–\$190K | \$135K–\$195K | \$150K–\$200K | \$125K–\$180K |

Software Development

13 ROLES

| ROLE                         | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           | WA            |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Front End Developer          | \$90K     | \$115K      | \$85K–\$110K  | \$80K–\$115K  | \$100K–\$115K | \$115K–\$150K | \$100K–\$115K |
| Back End Developer           | \$80K     | \$115K      | \$80K–\$115K  | \$85K–\$120K  | \$60K–\$115K  | \$135K–\$150K | \$80K–\$135K  |
| Full Stack Developer         | \$70K     | \$135K      | \$70K–\$115K  | \$100K–\$125K | \$100K–\$135K | \$115K–\$150K | \$60K–\$115K  |
| UI/UX Designer               | \$65K     | \$155K      | \$65K–\$150K  | \$70K–\$175K  | \$80K–\$150K  | \$75K–\$150K  | \$75K–\$150K  |
| Mobile Developer             | \$110K    | \$150K      | \$100K–\$145K | \$90K–\$150K  | \$100K–\$150K | \$115K–\$150K | \$75K–\$145K  |
| Senior Front End Developer   | \$115K    | \$135K      | \$110K–\$125K | \$115K–\$135K | \$115K–\$160K | \$160K–\$195K | \$120K–\$150K |
| Senior Back End Developer    | \$115K    | \$145K      | \$115K–\$145K | \$120K–\$185K | \$115K–\$145K | \$150K–\$195K | \$135K–\$150K |
| Senior Full Stack Developer  | \$135K    | \$150K      | \$115K–\$145K | \$125K–\$155K | \$135K–\$155K | \$145K–\$195K | \$115K–\$150K |
| Technical Lead               | \$135K    | \$185K      | \$135K–\$185K | \$150K–\$185K | \$130K–\$195K | \$185K–\$220K | \$140K–\$190K |
| Software Architect           | \$150K    | \$195K      | \$145K–\$160K | \$160K–\$195K | \$150K–\$195K | \$145K–\$220K | \$150K–\$120K |
| Solution Architect           | \$150K    | \$190K      | \$120K–\$150K | \$150K–\$210K | \$150K–\$220K | \$195K–\$240K | \$125K–\$195K |
| Software Development Manager | \$145K    | \$210K      | \$140K–\$185K | \$150K–\$240K | \$160K–\$220K | \$160K–\$220K | \$150K–\$230K |
| CIO                          | \$205K    | \$285K      | \$150K–\$210K | \$195K–\$285K | \$200K–\$365K | \$275K–\$365K | \$150K–\$280K |

Project Services & Change

15 ROLES

| ROLE                         | BNE FLOOR | BNE CEILING | SC            | NSW           | VIC           | ACT           |
|------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Business Analyst             | \$100K    | \$115K      | \$85K–\$110K  | \$100K–\$115K | \$90K–\$115K  | \$75K–\$115K  |
| Senior Business Analyst      | \$115K    | \$135K      | \$110K–\$135K | \$115K–\$145K | \$115K–\$160K | \$115K–\$135K |
| Project Coordinator          | \$85K     | \$100K      | \$65K–\$80K   | \$75K–\$115K  | \$75K–\$135K  | \$75K–\$90K   |
| Project Manager              | \$115K    | \$150K      | \$115K–\$140K | \$85K–\$125K  | \$115K–\$135K | \$120K–\$160K |
| Senior Project Manager       | \$125K    | \$180K      | \$135K–\$155K | \$125K–\$180K | \$135K–\$195K | \$150K–\$200K |
| Project Director             | \$180K    | \$210K      | \$150K–\$190K | \$200K–\$225K | \$195K–\$260K | \$150K–\$200K |
| Program Manager              | \$115K    | \$185K      | \$100K–\$160K | \$135K–\$210K | \$150K–\$220K | \$160K–\$220K |
| PMO Manager                  | \$145K    | \$220K      | \$135K–\$200K | \$125K–\$240K | \$135K–\$195K | \$145K–\$200K |
| Change Manager               | \$110K    | \$140K      | \$110K–\$130K | \$135K–\$160K | \$115K–\$155K | \$125K–\$150K |
| Senior Change Manager / Lead | \$140K    | \$165K      | \$140K–\$165K | \$160K–\$210K | \$155K–\$210K | \$150K–\$220K |
| Scrum Master                 | \$125K    | \$145K      | \$115K–\$145K | \$115K–\$185K | \$110K–\$165K | \$115K–\$150K |
| Product Manager              | \$115K    | \$150K      | \$75K–\$145K  | \$115K–\$195K | \$115K–\$165K | \$125K–\$160K |
| Enterprise Architect         | \$125K    | \$195K      | \$100K–\$195K | \$180K–\$235K | \$165K–\$245K | \$175K–\$240K |
| Penetration Tester           | \$110K    | \$150K      | \$85K–\$145K  | \$135K–\$160K | \$120K–\$165K | \$85K–\$160K  |
| Test Manager                 | \$135K    | \$150K      | \$115K–\$150K | \$135K–\$150K | \$115K–\$175K | \$145K–\$195K |



MedTech & FinTech

SPECIALIST VERTICALS · STRONG QLD GROWTH

| Role                          | BNE Floor | BNE Ceiling | SC            | NSW           | Trend             |
|-------------------------------|-----------|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| AI in Health Specialist       | \$120K    | \$150K      | \$110K–\$130K | \$135K–\$160K | ↑↑ Very Strong    |
| MedTech Product Manager       | \$125K    | \$165K      | \$110K–\$140K | \$140K–\$180K | ↑ Strong          |
| EHR Integration Specialist    | \$110K    | \$135K      | \$90K–\$120K  | \$120K–\$150K | ↑ Growing         |
| Clinical Software Developer   | \$100K    | \$125K      | \$85K–\$110K  | \$110K–\$140K | ↑ Stable          |
| Health Data Analyst           | \$95K     | \$115K      | \$85K–\$110K  | \$110K–\$130K | ↑ Rising          |
| Biomedical Systems Engineer   | \$85K     | \$120K      | \$75K–\$110K  | \$105K–\$130K | ↑ Stable          |
| FinTech Product Manager       | \$125K    | \$165K      | \$110K–\$140K | \$140K–\$180K | ↑ Strong          |
| Payments Integration Engineer | \$115K    | \$135K      | \$105K–\$120K | \$130K–\$155K | ↑ Rising          |
| Blockchain Developer          | \$140K    | \$150K      | \$125K–\$145K | \$150K–\$185K | ↔ Volatile        |
| RegTech Specialist            | \$110K    | \$125K      | \$90K–\$110K  | \$120K–\$145K | ↑ Regulatory push |
| Risk & Compliance Analyst     | \$90K     | \$95K       | \$80K–\$90K   | \$100K–\$115K | ↑ Steady          |
| Quantitative Analyst          | \$95K     | \$145K      | \$80K–\$125K  | \$110K–\$150K | ↑ Steady          |

# Four things the numbers **actually** tell us



## Interstate migration is rewriting QLD salary floors

NSW and VIC professionals relocating to SEQ are bringing their salary expectations and their employers are often matching them. This is pulling QLD benchmarks upward across mid to senior levels faster than organic market movement alone would suggest.



## Sunshine Coast has closed the gap at senior level

For junior and mid roles, SC still runs 10–20% below Brisbane. But senior specialists and architects are commanding near parity. Remote first employers have levelled the playing field for anyone above \$125K and SC professionals know it.



## AI is splitting the market, not shrinking it

Junior roles face real pressure from automation. But AI is creating more demand for experienced architects, ML engineers and governance specialists than it's eliminating. Net effect on total employment is still positive, but the distribution of opportunity is shifting sharply.



## The 2032 pipeline is already active

Olympic related digital infrastructure investment is flowing into Queensland tech now, not in 2031. Venues, transport, health and government contracts are creating sustained demand for infrastructure, project services and cybersecurity specialists across the SEQ corridor.

# Know the game. Play it well.

The market is in your favour, but only if you know how to navigate it. Here's what the data and our placement experience actually tell us about getting the outcome you deserve.

### 1 Research before you name a number

Use this guide, SEEK Salary Insights, LinkedIn Salary and peer conversations to triangulate your true market value before any interview. Know your floor and ceiling and the reasoning behind both, before the conversation starts. Vague expectations invite lowball offers.

### 2 Total package is the number that matters

Base salary is only part of the picture. Super above 11.5%, learning budgets, flexible leave, WFH hardware and health benefits all carry real dollar value. Build a full comparison before evaluating any offer and negotiate the whole package, not just the base.

### 3 Competing offers are your most honest leverage

A genuine competing offer changes the conversation entirely. Run your search in parallel where possible. Two similar offers give you the ability to negotiate from truth rather than pressure and employers know that's what's in play.

### 4 Certifications move the needle fast

In cloud and security, a single certification (AWS SA Professional, CISSP, CISM) can justify a \$15–20K adjustment mid career. They also convert ambition into provable capability during negotiation and give recruiters and employers a concrete data point to take to hiring managers.

## NEGOTIATION TACTICS

### 01 Anchor high and specifically

\$148,500 signals you've done your research. \$150,000 signals you're guessing. Anchoring 10–15% above your floor gives room to move without losing the deal.

### 02 Never accept on the spot

It's entirely professional to say "I'm very excited, can I have 24 hours to review the full package?" Pressure to decide immediately is a yellow flag worth noting.

### 03 When base is fixed, move elsewhere

Budget constraints are real. If base is locked, negotiate five extra days annual leave, a quarterly learning budget, a remote arrangement, or a six month review with a defined trigger.

### 04 The counter offer trap

Be genuinely clear about why you're moving before you engage the market. If money isn't the core driver, a counter offer won't fix what's broken and 60%+ of those who accept one leave within 12 months anyway.

### 05 Let them go first

When asked for salary expectations early: "I'd like to understand the full scope first, can you share the approved band?" This gives you information and keeps your options open.

# Stop losing people to problems you can see coming.

Retention isn't a mystery. The signals are almost always visible before the resignation. Here's what the market data and our placement experience across SEQ and nationally, tells us actually works.



### Benchmark continuously, not annually

The market moved 7–11% this year. Annual review cycles can't keep pace. Mid year, proactive adjustments for high demand roles are now a baseline expectation from experienced professionals, not a perk you're doing them a favour with.

*"If your finance team tracks costs quarterly, your people costs deserve the same discipline."*



### Build paths, not just perks

Clear, documented, realistic promotion pathways with defined criteria and honest timelines. That's what experienced professionals want. If you can't show someone what the next two years looks like, they'll find somewhere that can.

*"Structured career conversations every six months outperform annual reviews every time."*



### Make flexibility real, not stated

Flexibility listed in a job ad that doesn't match the actual experience will be discovered within the first month. In SEQ especially, where lifestyle is a genuine drawcard, the gap between what you promise and what you deliver is felt acutely.

*"The most retentive flexibility doesn't need to be negotiated. It's just how you work."*



### Invest in AI upskilling or watch talent walk

Tech professionals who aren't given access to AI tools and learning are actively seeking employers who will. This costs far less than a replacement hire. A \$5K annual learning budget returns more in loyalty than it costs in payroll.

*"AI access is now a retention tool, not a productivity initiative."*



### Act on exit interviews, actually

Most organisations collect exit data. Almost none systematically act on it. If three people in a year cite the same manager or the same culture issue and nothing changes, you're paying a preventable attrition tax and the whole team knows it.

*"Exit data is lagging. 1:1 honesty and skip levels are your early warning system."*



### Embrace salary transparency

Candidates are comparing notes, always. Internal pay equity issues surface quickly. When team members discover significant gaps for equivalent roles, trust collapses. Publishing salary bands in job ads is now a competitive advantage in QLD's tech market.

*"Our lowest attrition clients are consistently our most transparent ones on pay."*

## Attrition Risk by Role Type

Informed by Montagu Group placement data and candidate feedback across QLD, SEQ and national markets.

| Role Category        | Risk Level    | Primary Driver                                          | Retention Lever                                          |
|----------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| Cloud / DevOps       | Very High     | Unsolicited approaches; global remote competition       | Tech stack modernity; remote flexibility; cert support   |
| Cyber Security       | Very High     | Regulatory driven role creation; explosive demand       | Mission driven work; clear seniority path; training      |
| Data / AI            | High          | Equity offers from scale ups; AI product roles emerging | Interesting problems; tooling access; conference support |
| Software Development | Moderate–High | Tech debt frustration; remote alternatives              | Modern stack; autonomy; strong engineering leadership    |
| Project / Change     | Moderate      | Contract premiums; programme delivery burnout           | Portfolio variety; recognition; programme level exposure |
| IT Infrastructure    | Lower         | Stability seekers; role elimination risk from cloud     | Cloud upskilling; long term planning transparency        |

# What we think happens **next**

Five genuine predictions based on market signals, hiring data and structural trends, not safe hedges. We'll own these in the next edition.

01

QLD SPECIFIC · 12 MONTH VIEW

## Brisbane becomes a genuine Tier 1 tech salary market

The remaining 10–15% gap between Brisbane and Sydney at senior level will close within 18 months, driven by interstate migration, remote work normalisation and the Olympic infrastructure pipeline. QLD employers who treat their salary bands as a discount to Sydney will start losing people they previously retained on lifestyle grounds.

02

NATIONAL · NEAR TERM

## AI Engineer becomes Australia's most advertised specialist role

We're already seeing the early indicators. Within 12 months, "AI Engineer," someone who builds, integrates and governs production AI systems, will be the most advertised specialist tech role nationally. The salary ceiling for this role hasn't been established yet, which means first movers will set it. QLD's resources and health sectors will be early adopters.

03

STRUCTURAL SHIFT

## Junior role compression forces a rethink of graduate pipelines

Organisations hiring 10–20 graduates per year will cut this significantly as AI handles entry level output. The ones who navigate this well will invest those savings in fewer, higher quality junior hires with accelerated development tracks. The ones who don't will find their mid level pipeline empty in four years.

04

LEGISLATION WATCH

## Salary transparency legislation arrives: get ahead of it now

Following the UK and parts of Europe, Australian jurisdictions are moving toward mandated salary banding disclosure. Employers who've built equitable, transparent pay structures will face far less disruption. Those who haven't will face legislative pressure and internal equity crises simultaneously and the talent market will know the difference.

05

SUNSHINE COAST

## The SC tech market matures into a genuine specialist destination

The Sunshine Coast will shift from a lifestyle driven secondary market to a recognised destination for senior tech professionals within 24 months. MedTech, digital agencies and remote first professional services employers will anchor this. SC organisations that invest in talent infrastructure now will have first mover advantage in a market that Brisbane competitors are just beginning to notice.



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# Let's talk about what's next.

Whether you're building a team in Brisbane, hiring on the Sunshine Coast, or navigating a national talent strategy, we're here with real market insight, honest advice and connections that actually fit.



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## ALSO WORTH YOUR TIME

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#### *Conversations That Connect*

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- ▶ Practical, honest, with zero corporate fluff
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### HOW MONTAGU CAN HELP

- ▶ Salary benchmarking and market intelligence for your specific roles
- ▶ Talent strategy and workforce planning for QLD & SEQ growth
- ▶ Candidate career advisory and profile positioning
- ▶ Resume reviews, LinkedIn optimisation and interview preparation



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IT & Digital Salary Guide · FY2026 · Queensland & Australia Wide  
All figures in AUD, permanent roles, base salary excluding superannuation