

Submitted: 4th November 2019

- I. The Geological Society (GSL) is the UK's learned and professional body for geoscience and a major international Earth science publisher with about 12,000 Fellows (members) worldwide. The Fellowship encompasses those working in industry, academia, regulatory agencies and government with a broad range of perspectives on policy-relevant science, and the Society is a leading communicator of this science to government bodies, those in education, and other non-technical audiences.
- II. We are not best placed to respond to all of the questions outlined in the inquiry but have instead responded to questions as and where they relate to the geoscience sectors and where we have received relevant evidence from our Fellowship.
- III. Our response to this call for evidence is a collation of evidence from different sectors within the geosciences and thus some answers may appear contradictory.
- IV. This submission summarises evidence provided to the Society in direct response to this consultation as well as anecdotal evidence gathered through ongoing dialogue with stakeholders.
- V. Key points from the geoscience sector:
 - a. Diversions from the national average salary value vary by region around the UK. This disparity means that the challenge of meeting salary thresholds is not evenly distributed around the UK.
 - b. Existing settlement salary thresholds are currently that of a Chartered geologist – a process that takes a minimum of four years to complete - so the timeframe for salary progression is not commensurate with expected career progression across the geoscience sector.
 - c. Burden of appealing for allowances to the current system is concentrated on smaller business and those in regions where the cost of living is lower.
 - d. SMEs have reported issues with retention due to the uncertainty posed by the visa process.
 - e. The ability to recruit staff at technician level is particularly vulnerable to the current and proposed salary thresholds.