

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

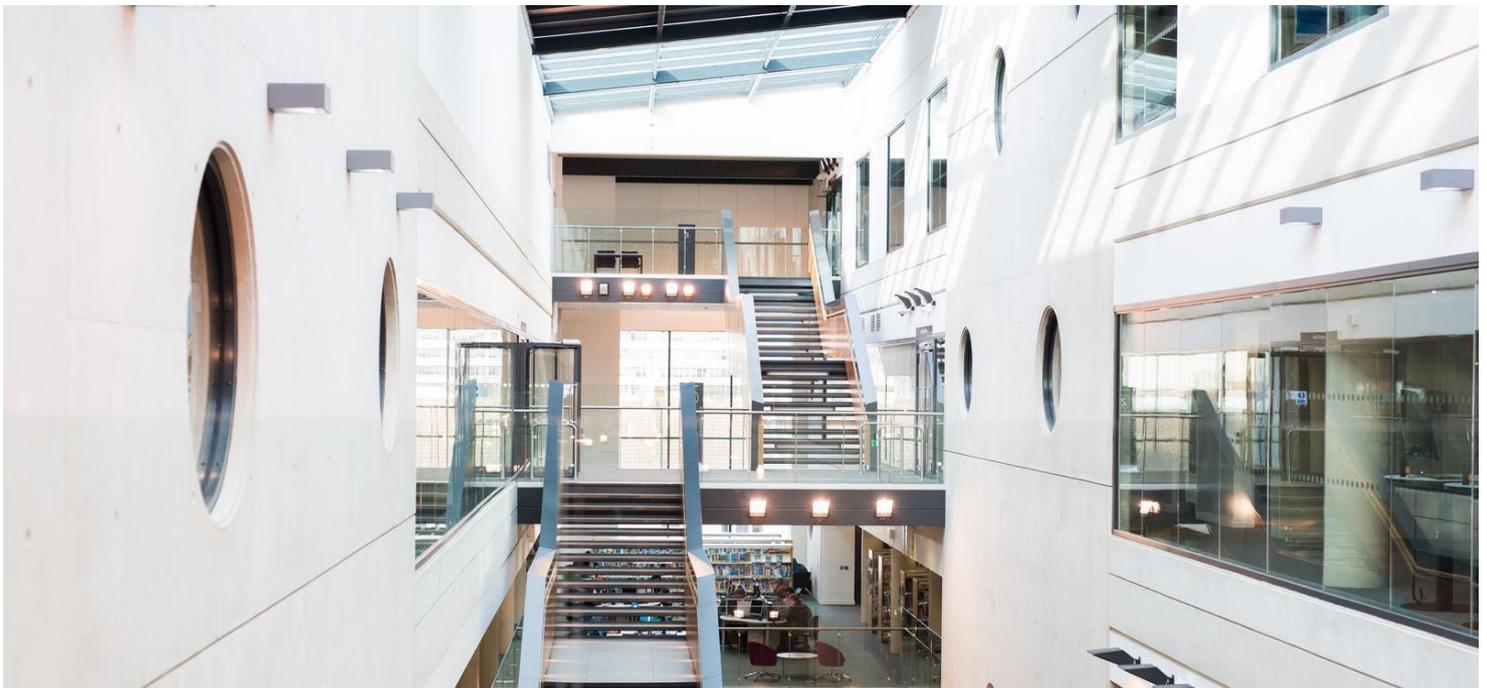
At the University of Essex, our mission is to achieve excellence in education and research, for the benefit of individuals and communities. People are at the centre of everything we do and we aspire to build a culture in which every member of the University feels valued and can flourish, and we recognise that our ability to do this is built on the talents and capability of our people.

We are committed to addressing inequity and building an inclusive environment where all members, regardless of their gender, can succeed. Reducing our gender pay gap is one of our institutional priorities and we remain committed in our efforts to do so thus nurturing our shared commitment to supporting every person in our university community to achieve their full potential.

Our commitment is demonstrated, in part, through being a member of the Athena Swan Charter. We successfully renewed our institutional bronze Athena Swan award in March 2024, and are now focusing on implementing the actions identified within the institutional Athena SWAN action plan 2024-2029. 15 of our departments also hold Athena SWAN awards, including four at a silver level.

Mandatory Pay Gap Reporting

We are now in the seventh year of regulatory reporting of gender pay gap data for medium and large organisations. For statutory purposes, we report on the difference between men's and women's average earnings across the organisation. Internally, we also monitor equal pay for work of equal value, to ensure we close any gaps between pay for women and men for similar work.



What is our Gender Pay Gap?

Our statutory mean gender pay gap has continued to reduce, from 15.10% on 31 March 2022 to 14.97% on 31 March 2023. It is encouraging to see a positive shift in our median gender pay gap which has reduced to 16.80% after remaining at 18.60% for the last three years, but it is important to note that our median pay gap is prone to fluctuation.

We are incredibly pleased to report that our mean bonus pay gap has seen a notable reduction from 7.6% having previously been 19.46% and there continues to be no significant evidence that overall women are paid less for men for work of the same value as most gaps by grade are within the +/-5% range.

A further analysis of the data highlights the following key trends:

- There has been an increase in the proportion of women at Grade 9, with a reduction in the proportion of women at Grades 1-4, and slight reductions (<1%) in the proportions of women at Grades 10 and 11.
- The proportion of women at Grade 9 has now passed 50%. This, combined with the reduction in the proportion of women within grades 1-4, will have contributed to the continuation of the trend for the last four years of decreasing our mean gender pay gap.
- Due to the shape and size of our staff population by gender, the median pay point for women is not readily susceptible to change, whereas the median pay point for men is near a boundary between hourly rates and as such is readily susceptible to change. The increase in proportion of men in lower grades, with salaries below the median point for men, has been a significant driver for reducing our median pay gap in March 2023, although this trend could fluctuate in the future.
- Our mean gender pay gap is broadly in line with other S10 institutions, and lower than Pre-92 institutions. Our median pay gap is higher than comparator institutions, and this is because we have a higher percentage of women in our workforce overall, and also the greater incidence of women in the lower middle quartile of our workforce and fewer women in the top quartile than our comparators.

Why do we have a Gender Pay Gap?

The uneven grade distribution of male and female staff, with a greater concentration of women in roles at the lower end of our pay scales and men in roles at the higher end, is the single largest contributing factor to our overall institutional pay gap. Women make up most staff in Grades 1 to 4 at 64.9%. Representation of women at Grade 9 has risen this year from 47.86% in March 2022 to 50.4% in March 2023, crossing 50%. However, the proportion of women in grades 10 and 11 decreased slightly (<1%) and the proportions of women in higher grades is still lower than the proportion of women in grades 1 – 4, which is contributing to our mean and median pay gaps.

Examples of what we have done so far to reduce the gender pay gap.

Recruitment

- Created a Women in STEM micro-site, to raise the profile of women in STEM at the University and to attract more women to apply for vacancies.
- Provided salary information for comparable roles to recruiting managers to support starting salary negotiations.
- Created a Gender Pay Gap dashboard, which has enabled us to provide pay information to hiring managers to inform decisions on appointments and starting salaries.
- Reviewed Academic and Professional Services job pack designs, to ensure that the language is inclusive and does not deter certain groups from applying for roles at the University.
- Continued to encourage departments to use positive action statements in recruitment adverts, where appropriate, to encourage applications from under-represented groups.
- To support the maintenance of equal pay for equal work there are strong policies in place around starting pay for new appointments, and when salary increases for senior staff are being considered as part of the annual review process.

Progression and Development

- Reinstated academic promotion workshops from academic year 2023-24.
- The Women's Network arranged two roundtable events on 7 February and 8 March 2023 leading up to the annual review cycle, to raise awareness of the process. Separate roundtables were held for Academic and Professional Services staff, to focus on information most relevant to them. Similar workshop took place in February 2024.

Other areas

- Continued promotion of flexible working, which is an important driver for staff with caring responsibilities, who are more likely to be women.
- Developed our new institutional Athena SWAN action plan 2024–29, as part of our Bronze award renewal application.
- Continuation of work in encouraging and supporting departments to submit for departmental Athena SWAN Awards, in line with our strategic objectives. Fifteen out of 18 eligible departments have now been accredited, with the Department of Literature, Film, and Theatre Studies achieving its first Athena SWAN award in November 2023. Work is ongoing to support the remaining departments in submitting their application.

What else are we doing to close the gender pay gap?

Continuing to reduce the gender pay gap is a long-term commitment that will involve growing our female staff in the upper pay quartile and creating a greater gender balance between women and men in the middle and lower pay quartiles. Further commitments include:

- Continue to use positive action statements for roles where certain demographics are under-represented to encourage applications from those groups.
- Consider how apprenticeships can be better integrated into the development offer for staff in Grades 1-6.
- Carry out further analysis on our median pay gap to better understand the impact of gender imbalances and pay imbalances within grades and types of workers.
- Identify targeted actions that could be taken to reduce the gender pay gap within individual departments and sections
- newly designed recruitment selection training for managers which will include gender pay gap considerations
- Review longitudinal data for women across the University to see if their continued service has contributed to the gender pay gap.

14.97%

Mean gender pay gap

16.80%

Median gender pay gap

£21.42

Mean hourly rate of ordinary pay for women

£19.32

Median hourly rate of ordinary pay for women

£25.19

Mean hourly rate of ordinary pay for men

£23.22

Median hourly rate of ordinary pay for men

We have 3258 staff of whom 1840 (56.48%) are female and 1418 (43.52%) are male.

7.60%

Mean bonus gender gap

0.00%

Median bonus gender gap

£850.30

Mean bonus pay for women

£750

Median bonus pay for women

£920.24

Mean bonus pay for men

£750

Median bonus pay for men

283 staff received a bonus of whom 168 (59.36%) were female and 115 (40.64%) were male.