Gender pay gap report 2023

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Key points

- The mean gender pay gap has remained the same as 2022 at 17.6% in 2023.
- The median gender pay gap has decreased from 14.9% in 2022 to 12.9% in 2023.
- The mean gender pay gap for those staff on the University grade scale is below 2.9% for each individual grade, except for Grade 3 (6.8%) and Grade 9 (9.5%).
- The main drivers of gender pay gap are the distribution of staff (with women forming a majority of staff at the lower paid grades and minority of staff at the higher paid grades) and the difference in pay at Grade 9.

Introduction

Equality, diversity, and inclusion is a core pillar in the University Strategy. The University is committed to promoting inclusivity and providing equal opportunity for all of its staff and students.

The University was first awarded an institutional Athena Swan Bronze Award in 2013, and was awarded an Athena Swan Silver Award in 2024, which recognised our commitments and achievement in addressing gender equality issues. All our academic schools hold a school level Athena Swan Award including one Gold and five Silver.

This is our seventh report on the gender pay gap. We continue to monitor our gender pay gaps, work to understand reasons for pay differentials, and strengthen our actions to address gender imbalance in recruitment and promotion in order to reduce the gender pay gap (see Closing the gap).

We adopt a framework provided by the UK Government in calculating our gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the average hourly pay of men and women across the whole organisation. It is not a measure of unequal pay, which is the difference in pay between men and women doing the same job. Unequal pay is against the law, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

This analysis is based on our payroll data as at 31 March 2023. This report focuses on the gender pay gap. Our ethnicity pay gap report is available online, and further analysis will be conducted to assess the disability pay gap among the 2023 population.

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Key findings on gender pay gap

The population

As at 31 March 2023, there were 3,867 staff members who were on the University payroll and who met the UK Government's definition for inclusion in the gender pay gap population. This population includes staff on both salaried and flexible contracts, standard and fixed term, and full-time and part-time hours. Of the total 3,867 staff members, 52.7% (2,039) were female and 47.3% (1,828) were male (Figure 1).

Figure 1, Staff population by gender, 2023
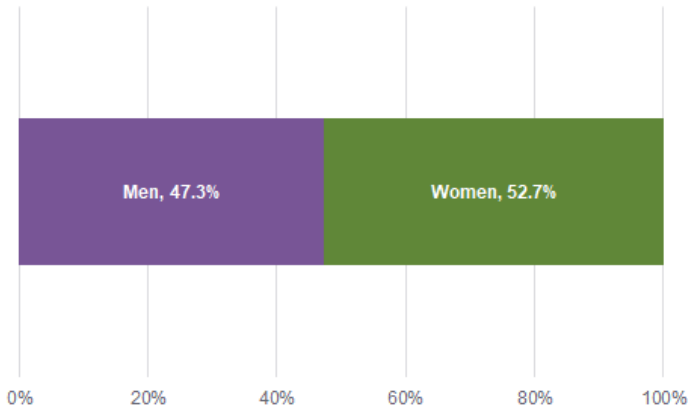
Overall gender pay gap 2023

The gender pay gap is the percentage difference between the average hourly rate for male staff and female staff.

Our mean gender pay gap for 2023 is 17.6%. This means the mean average hourly pay for a man is 17.6% higher than for a woman.

Our median gender pay gap for 2023 is 12.9%. This means if you arrange all the women and all the men in order by their hourly rate, the hourly rate for the middle woman is 12.9% lower than that for the middle man.

Trends in gender pay gap

The overall mean gender pay gap has been declining since our first report in 2017 (Figure 2). It has fallen by 5.7 percentage points between 2017 and 2023. The mean gender pay gap remains the same size as in 2022.

**Figure 2, Mean gender pay gap, 2017 to 2023**
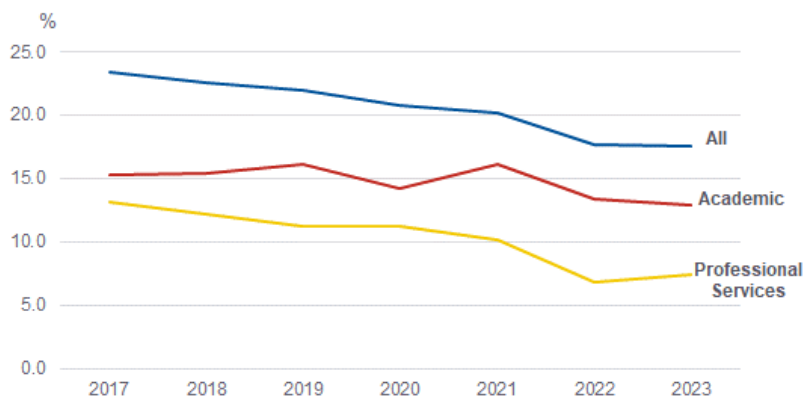
	All	Academic	Professional Services
2017	23.3%	15.3%	13.2%
2018	22.6%	15.5%	12.1%
2019	21.9%	16.1%	11.3%
2020	20.7%	14.2%	11.2%
2021	20.2%	16.1%	10.1%
2022	17.6%	13.4%	6.9%
2023	17.6%	12.9%	7.4%

The mean gender pay gap for salaried academic staff of 12.9% is now at its lowest since 2017. For salaried professional services staff, the gap has widened slightly to 7.4% from 6.9%. This widening is due to an increase in new female professional services staff in Grades 2, 3, and 4 who are on the initial scale point of the grade.

Figure 3 Median gender pay gap, 2017 to 2023
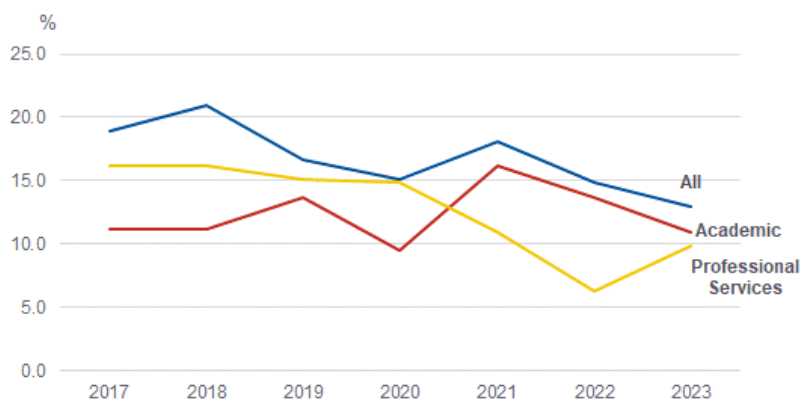
|	All	Academic	Professional Services
2017	18.9%	11.1%	16.2%
2018	21.0%	11.1%	16.2%
2019	16.6%	13.7%	15.1%
2020	15.1%	9.5%	14.9%
2021	18.1%	16.1%	10.9%
2022	14.9%	13.7%	6.3%
2023	12.9%	10.9%	9.9%

The median gender pay gap is at its narrowest point since 2017 at 12.9% (Figure 3). The salaried academic gender pay gap continues to fall (having increased in 2021). However, the salaried professional services median gap has increased to 9.9% but remains significantly below the 2021 median gap of 10.9%

Gender pay quartile

Figure 4 shows that there is a higher proportion of women (compared to men) in both the lower pay quartile and the lower middle pay quartile. There is a higher proportion of men in the upper middle and upper pay quartiles.

Figure 4, Gender distribution in each quartile, 2023
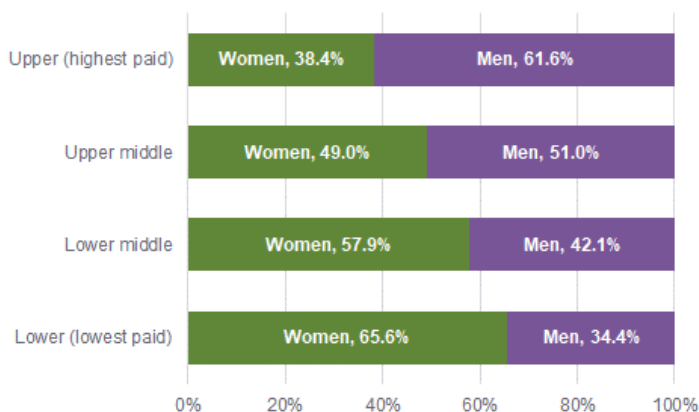
Gender pay gap UK benchmarks

Based on the ONS report the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (2023 Provisional), the mean gender pay gap for all employees in the UK is 13.2% (4.4 percentage points lower than St Andrews) and the median gender pay gap is 14.3% (1.4 percentage points higher than St Andrews).

Advance HE's Staff Statistical Report (2023) reported that in UK higher education in 2021/22, the mean gender pay gap was 14.2% and the median pay gap was 8.5%. In Scottish HE the mean gender pay gap was 14.4% and the median pay gap was 13.7%.

It should be noted that our gender pay gap figures may not be directly comparable to the UK gender pay gap benchmarks due to the differences in the methodology and the data sources used.

The gender pay gap in Advance HE's Staff Statistical Report (2023) is based on the contract salary for members of staff at each institution at 31 July in the reporting period, or the end date of the contract if earlier. Members of staff for whom the concept of a per annum contractual salary does not apply (e.g. staff paid hourly) have been excluded from Advance HE's analysis.

Gender pay gap by grade

Most salaried staff of the University are employed on a 9- point grade scale, details of which can be found on the University's website. When the mean gender pay gap is broken down by grade (see Appendix), the analysis shows that the mean gender pay gaps for Grades 1 to 8 are 2.9% or less except for Grade 3 (6.8%). The median gender pay gaps for Grades 1 to 8 are also low, at 2.8% or less.

The mean and median gender pay gaps for Grade 9 are 9.5% and 9.8% respectively, which is a decrease compared with 2022 when the respective gaps were 12.2% and 12.4%.

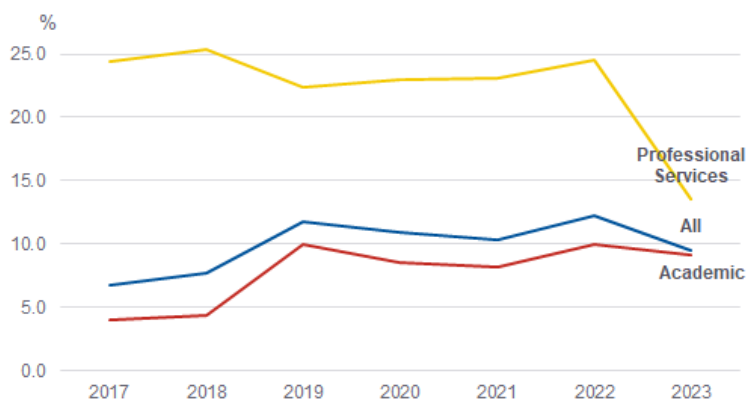**Figure 5, Median Grade 9 gender pay gap, 2017 to 2023**
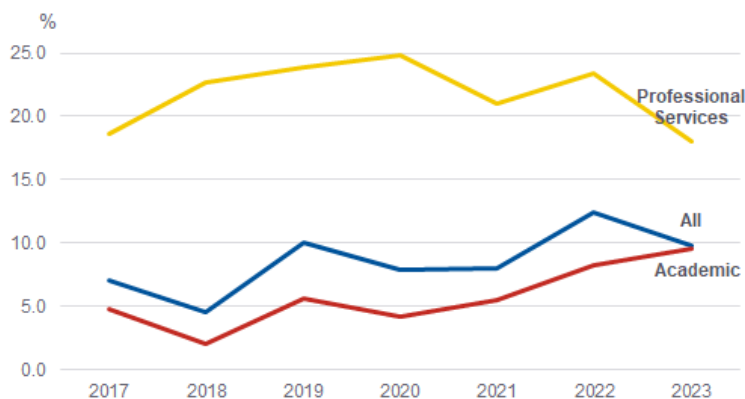
	All	Academic	Professional Services
2017	7.1%	4.8%	18.6%
2018	4.6%	2.1%	22.7%
2019	10.1%	5.6%	23.8%
2020	7.9%	4.2%	24.9%
2021	8.0%	5.5%	21.1%
2022	12.4%	8.2%	23.4%
2023	9.8%	9.6%	18.0%

Figure 6, Mean Grade 9 gender pay gap, 2017 to 2023

	All	Academic	Professional Services
2017	6.7%	4.0%	24.4%
2018	7.7%	4.4%	25.4%
2019	11.8%	9.9%	22.3%
2020	10.9%	8.6%	23.0%
2021	10.4%	8.2%	23.1%
2022	12.2%	10.0%	24.6%
2023	9.5%	9.1%	13.5%

These gaps are driven by the fact that a much higher proportion of women are in the lowest paying Band A of Grade 9 compared with men, which can be seen in Figure 7.

The mean and median pay gap for academic Grade 9 staff are 9.6% and 9.1% respectively. Whilst the mean gap is smaller than in 2022 (10.0%), both the mean and median academic Grade 9 gender pay gaps have grown since 2017 (Figures 5 and 6). This is a result of the actions we have taken to improve the representation of women in the professoriate, as newly promoted Professors are appointed into Band A.

The pay gap for professional service staff at Grade 9 is wider than for academic staff (Figure 5 and 6). However, following a Senior Pay Review in 2022-23, the Grade 9 pay gap for professional services fell from 23.4% in 2022 to 18.0% in 2023 (mean) and 24.6% in 2022 to 13.5% in 2023 (median).

Figure 7, Proportion of men and women by Grade 9 band

| Grade 9 band	Men	Women
Legacy	20.0%	6.7%
Band A	39.4%	57.3%
Band B	23.9%	22.7%
Band C	16.7%	13.3%

Note: In 2017 the University introduced a sub-grade pay banding structure within Grade 9 (i.e., 9A, 9B, and 9C). Staff are moved to the new structure during the pay review process, but some staff remain on legacy Grade 9 pay points.

Gender Pay Gaps for Flexible Contracts

Our staff on flexible contracts are generally hourly paid. This group of staff account for 21.6% (836 headcount) of the gender pay gap population and are typically amongst the lower paid of our staff.

The mean and median gender pay gaps for staff on flexible contracts are 12.3% and 15.6% respectively. Figure 8 shows that 69.7% of male staff on flexible contracts are academic staff, compared with 54.4% of female staff on flexible contracts. Given the higher hourly pay for academic flexible contracts, this gender imbalance has resulted in the overall mean gender pay gap for flexible contracts.

Figure 8, Flexible contract staff by job family, 2023
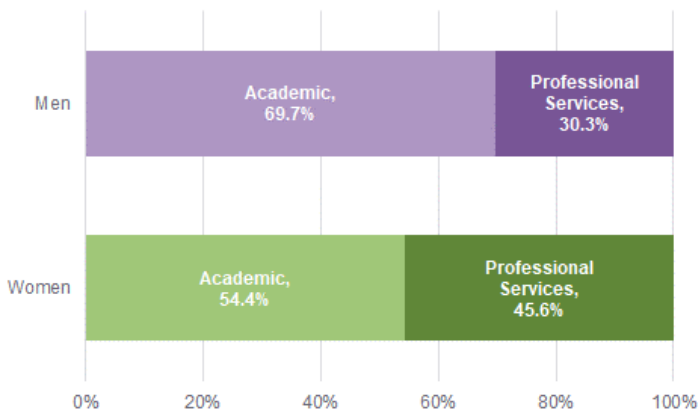
Gender pay gap for other groups

Gender pay gap for Apprentice, Off-scale (various roles are included in this category) and NHS (staff on NHS pay scale) are not covered in this report. These groups of staff are not on the University grade scale. Total number of staff members in each of these groups are small. When figures for each of these groups are broken down for analysis, some numbers are too small for publishing. However, the further analysis on gender pay gap for these groups will be carried out. The results will be discussed internally.

Bonus payments

The University currently has no contractual bonus arrangements.

Closing the gap

Since 2017, we have taken a series of actions to enhance gender equality and contribute to closing the gender pay gap. These include:

- enhancing recruitment processes to increase the proportion of women joining the University, especially in senior academic roles
- restricting single-sex recruitment shortlists for academic posts, including for senior roles where recruitment agencies are used
- developing and implementing Academic Review and Development Scheme (ARDS) guidance for Heads of School

- revising the promotions procedure to give a clear pathway for staff in education-focused roles
- enhancing participation in mentoring and leadership programmes to support women's career development, including through our bespoke Elizabeth Garrett programme
- undertaking regular pay reviews for all Grade 9 staff
- improving family-friendly policies to support staff with caring responsibilities, such as reduced workload for academic staff returning from parental leave

At the same time, we are committed to making further progress and have identified closing the gender pay gap as a continuing key priority in our 2024 Athena Swan Silver submission. As part of that we have set out a number of actions including to:

- Develop a comprehensive report on use of pay levers over last 5 years to ensure there are no inconsistencies that may contribute to the gender pay gap.
- Model the impact of different interventions on the gender pay gap and associated costs to identify concrete mechanisms to drive progress and support a business case to the Principal's Office.
- Review criteria and provide greater clarity around distinction between banding of Grade 9 roles and purpose of Professorial and Senior Salary Reviews to support transparency and understanding.

Actions on increasing representation of women in senior roles, such as reviewing recruitment and promotions related processes, set out in the Athena Swan Action Plan will also contribute to closing the gender pay gap.

Progress on delivering these actions and their impact will be overseen by an Athena Swan Implementation Group to be established in Summer 2024.